

# International GCSE in French (4FR1), German (4GN1), Spanish (4SP1): Oral Examination Training Guide

## Introduction

This guide is designed to advise teachers on how best to prepare students for examination in International GCSE Modern Foreign Languages Paper 3, and how to conduct the oral exam.

This guide is not prescriptive.

Part 1 of the guide outlines a generic overview for oral assessment whilst Part 2 gives more detailed subject specific commentaries on exemplar oral assessment.

## Essential preparation

Teachers should familiarise themselves with the details of the International GCSE oral examination (Paper 3) including the paper description, assessment requirements and assessment criteria in each specification.

Teachers should also refer to the Oral Training Guide section in the MFL *Getting Started* guide:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/International%20GCSE/French/2017/teaching-and-learning-materials/International-GCSE-French-Getting-Started-Guide.pdf>

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/International%20GCSE/German/2017/Teaching%20and%20learning/International-GCSE-German-Getting-Started-Guide.pdf>

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/International%20GCSE/Spanish/2017/teaching-learning-materials/International-GCSE-Spanish-Getting-Started-Guide.pdf>

It is essential that teachers are aware of the requirements of each unit, any incorrectly conducted tests can adversely affect candidates' marks.

## Part 1 – Generic overview of oral assessment

### General information

The speaking assessment

- is conducted internally and is externally assessed.
- is worth 40 marks.
- comprises 25% of the qualification.
- must be conducted entirely in French, German or Spanish as appropriate.
- must be conducted in one continuous session.
- must be recorded.

A04 Communicate in speech, showing knowledge of a range of vocabulary in common usage and of the grammar and structures prescribed in the specification, and using them accurately. This Assessment Objective is tested in Paper 3.

The assessment aims for this paper are:

- describe the contents of a picture
- describe possible past or future events related to people in the picture
- respond to questions about the picture and its related topic
- take part in a spontaneous conversation on two further topics.

### **Task A**

In Task A students respond to questions on a picture of their own choice - they will no longer give a presentation. They may select a picture from any sub-topic area excluding sub-topics A3 (Services), C3 (Role models), C5 (Childhood), D2 (Weather and climate) and E4 (Accidents, injuries, common ailments and health issues). These will not be assessed in Task A. Information about the suitability of pictures is given later in this guide.

### **Tasks B and C**

In Tasks B and C candidates take part in a spontaneous discussion. These tasks test students on two topics that have not been specifically prepared so as to test spontaneity of response. The importance of spontaneity in student response is reflected in the assessment criteria. The teacher/examiner uses the randomisation grid provided by Pearson to determine which topics are to be examined in Tasks B and C. Task C should continue without a pause or interruption from Task B.

Students complete all three tasks in consecutive order.

### **Use of notes**

Students must not take notes with them into the examination. However, they should bring their picture for Task A.

### **Timings**

The total assessment time is 8–10 minutes. The timing starts when the candidate answers the first assessment question. The timing of the individual tasks is as follows:

- Task A: 2 to 3 minutes
- Task B: 3 to 3 minutes 30 seconds
- Task C: 3 to 3 minutes 30 seconds

Tasks B and C should not exceed 7 minutes. Excess candidate material will not be assessed.

## **Topics**

### **Topic**

A. Home and abroad

### **Sub-topics**

1 Life in the town and rural life

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2 Holidays, tourist information and directions</li><li>3 Services (e.g. bank, post office)*</li><li>4 Customs</li><li>5 Everyday life, traditions and communities</li></ul>
B. Education and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 School life and routine</li><li>2 School rules and pressures</li><li>3 School trips, events and exchanges</li><li>4 Work, careers and volunteering</li><li>5 Future plans</li></ul>
C. Personal life and relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 House and home</li><li>2 Daily routines and helping at home</li><li>3 Role models*</li><li>4 Relationships with family and friends</li><li>5 Childhood*</li></ul>
D. The world around us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 Environmental issues</li><li>2 Weather and climate*</li><li>3 Travel and transport</li><li>4 The media</li><li>5 Information and communication technology</li></ul>
E. Social activities, fitness and health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 Special occasions</li><li>2 Hobbies, interests, sports and exercise</li><li>3 Shopping and money matters</li><li>4 Accidents, injuries, common ailments and health issues*</li><li>5 Food and drink</li></ul>

## Task A

In this task students will answer questions on a picture.

**NB: There is no presentation on the picture.**

Students must choose their own picture for the test. Teachers must not allow all students in the centre to choose the same picture.

### Photo Selection Guidance

The instructions in the Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs) are as follows:  
Candidates will provide a picture that fulfils the criteria in the specification. The picture must contain the following elements:

- people
- objects
- interactions.

Students should select a suitable picture which will allow for a variety of different approaches to be taken in the test and which relates directly to the chosen Topic Area.

Students should be given the following advice:

<b>When selecting a suitable picture for Task A, ensure ...</b>	<b>When selecting a suitable picture for Task A, avoid ...</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ... there is more than one person in the picture</li> <li>• ... you can describe the people in the picture and what they are doing</li> <li>• ... there are objects (e.g. luggage, books, phones) which you can relate to activities</li> <li>• ... the people are interacting (e.g. eating together, opening presents, playing in a team)</li> <li>• ... you think about what has happened beforehand and what might happen later</li> <li>• ... you make links with the picture and the wider Topic Area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pictures with no people (e.g. a house on its own)</li> <li>• pictures with little happening (e.g. a picture of a face)</li> <li>• pictures in which the people are not interacting (e.g. a group of unrelated individuals in an advertisement)</li> <li>• pictures of an object (e.g. a laptop)</li> <li>• pictures which do not relate to the Topic Areas listed in the Specification</li> <li>• pictures which come from one of the sub-topics <i>banned</i> in the speaking test (e.g. Role models or Weather and climate)</li> <li>• pictures which contain any text which could support you in your responses.</li> </ul>

For examples of pictures, please see the SAMs document which is available on our website.

Teacher/examiners may not practise Task A with their students using the picture they will be using in the test. They may use other pictures on the same topic but they may not practise or rehearse using the candidates' chosen picture.

Students must provide a copy of the picture for the teacher/examiner in advance of the test.

### **Teacher/examiner questions**

Teacher/examiners must prepare five questions to ask each student about their chosen picture, but must not share these questions with students before the test. The pattern of these five questions must follow the examples in the SAMs and the advice given in the specification. They require different levels of response:

Question type 1: A description of what you can see in the picture

- Question type 2: Specific factual information about the picture  
For example, select a person or persons in the picture and state what they are doing.
- Question type 3: Past or future hypothesis  
This question must ask the candidate to imagine a possible past or potential future event relating to the picture. This is the opportunity to support the candidate in using additional tenses and time frames.
- Question type 4: Opinions about the picture  
This question elicits the candidate's opinions on the picture and the topic.
- Question type 5: Evaluation  
The teacher/examiner should elicit an evaluation from the candidate. This question will move away from the content of the picture and exploit the wider topic area.

Teachers must ensure they ask each student one question from each of these five types. They should ask the questions in the order they are given above. Each question should normally be asked only once. However, questions may be repeated, but not rephrased.

For examples of these questions, please see the SAMs document, which is available on our website. Teachers/examiners must mirror the style of questions in the sample assessment materials but not replicate them.

In order to enable candidates to develop their responses teacher/examiners are allowed to use prompts for questions. Only the following three prompts (in the relevant language) may be used:

- Why (not)?
- Anything else?
- Is that all?

There must be no other supplementary questions and teacher/examiners must not deviate from these prompts.

### **Assessment:**

Marks are awarded using the Assessment Grids for Task A given in the specification:

Communication and content: up to 8 marks are available in this grid

Linguistic knowledge and accuracy: up to 4 marks are available in this grid

### **Advice for examiners during Task A discussion**

- Do not point at anything (people, objects or interactions) in the picture.
- Never correct a candidate's language, however inaccurate, during a test.
- Avoid finishing sentences for candidates except where it would be in their interest to move on to something else.

## Tasks B and C

Students will discuss in Task B and Task C two further different topics, chosen at random by Pearson from the Topics listed on page 3 of this document and on page 11 of the Specification.

### Randomisation grid

In order to avoid misconduct in centres, teachers/examiners/candidates will receive randomisation grids three days in advance of the oral window from Pearson. Based on the topic chosen for the picture-based discussion task, the teacher/examiner will use a randomisation grid to select the discussion topics for the first and second conversation (Tasks B and C). An example randomisation grid is available on page 69 of the SAMs.

Three distinct topics must be examined across Tasks A, B and C. The topic chosen for Task A must be different from the topic selected at random for Task B. The topic for Task C, also selected at random, will be different from both of the previous topics in Tasks A and B. If any topics are the same, the task(s) will be discounted and the candidate will receive zero marks for that task(s).

### Examining technique

It is important to note that all Topic Areas can be assessed at any level. Teacher/examiners should guard against limiting their students to simple descriptive language, ensuring at all times that they are given the opportunity to access and produce abstract language. This involves moving on from the more concrete language of description learned at Key Stage 3 towards the language of justification required at a higher level. For example, students may be able to describe fitness activities, but at a higher level should also be able to explain why they are important, express their opinions about a variety of activities and justify their ideas.

For each conversation (Tasks B and C) teachers/examiners should:

- ask open questions
- ask questions at a level appropriate to the candidate's ability
- link the questions to the previous response as far as possible
- elicit a range of tenses (past, present and future)
- elicit a range of structures and vocabulary
- elicit opinions and justifications
- provide candidates with an opportunity to expand
- respect timings

**Assessment:**

Marks are awarded globally over Tasks B and C using the Assessment Grids given in the specification:

Communication and content: up to 12 marks are available in this grid

Interaction and spontaneity: up to 8 marks are awarded in this grid

Linguistic knowledge and accuracy: up to 8 marks are available in this grid

Examples of **open questions** which allow students the freedom to expand answers are:

- To what extent is it important to go on holiday?
- Why would you recommend your town/village to a tourist?
- What sort of things cause young people stress at school?
- To what extent is it important to have a well-paid job?
- Why should young people help around the house, in your opinion?
- How would you describe a good friend?
- What are the advantages of mobile phones?
- In your opinion, why is breakfast the most important meal of the day?

Examples of closed questions which are **not** suitable except for the weakest students or to enable the conversation to move on are:

- Where do you live?
- How did you travel?
- What is your favourite subject?
- Are you happy at school?
- What is your school called?
- Have you been on a school trip?
- Do you use a computer?
- Is free time important?
- Do you like going shopping?
- Can you swim?

**Questions at a level appropriate to the candidate's ability**

Teacher-examiners will be aware of the linguistic level of their students and can prepare how best to begin each discussion and ask questions at the correct level for the candidate. For example, for a very able student, the discussion on school may be initiated with a wide-ranging question such as To what extent is your school a good school? A less confident student may need more support: the opening question might be Tell me something about your school day? Only the least able should be asked questions such as What is the name of your school? / At what time does the school day begin?

**Linking questions to the previous response as far as possible**

Most importantly, teachers must allow the discussion to flow, responding to students' answers as naturally as possible whilst keeping in mind the requirements of the test. At no stage should a list of prepared questions be asked.

For further examples of appropriate questions, please see the SAMs document. Teachers/examiners must mirror the style of questions in the SAMs but not replicate them.

### **Interaction and spontaneity**

Teachers should prepare their students to interact naturally in German rather than to answer a set of pre-prepared questions. The latter will lead to disappointing marks even for the best students. To encourage this the following types of activities could be used in the classroom:

### **Advice for examiners during Tasks B and C conversations**

- Avoid yes/no questions, except as a lead-in to something more challenging.
- Ensure that questions allow students to achieve their maximum potential, for example by covering a range of tenses/time references and opinions as appropriate within the prescribed time for the conversation.
- Throughout the conversation, in order to facilitate a genuine and spontaneous interaction, the nature of questions from the teacher/examiner should enable students to: (1) answer questions freely, in turn allowing them to produce extended sequences of speech (2) develop conversations and discussions (3) give and justify own thoughts and opinions (4) refer to past, present and future events.
- Never correct a candidate's language, however inaccurate, during a test.
- Avoid finishing sentences for students except where it would be in their interest to move on to something else.
- Try to stimulate candidates to produce their best performance, taking them to their 'linguistic ceiling' but being careful not to press on with questions of a certain difficulty if it becomes clear that a candidate cannot cope at that level.
- Interventions (questions, brief statements, instructions, comments etc.) should always develop flexibly and build logically on what candidates have said.
- Candidates should be encouraged to speak independently and spontaneously and not be allowed to produce rehearsed speeches. Candidates who repeat pre-learned or memorised material should be interrupted and encouraged to produce more spontaneous discourse.

### **Recording of candidates' speaking tests**

All candidates' speaking tests must be recorded. The centre should keep a copy of all recordings. Where recordings fail or are unsatisfactory, you must re-examine as soon as possible.

It is essential to check that:

- the microphone and recorder are connected correctly, and recording is taking place
- the position of the microphone favours the candidate and not the examiner
- extraneous noise is kept to a minimum
- the recorder is switched on at the start of the test and off at the end



- the language, CD number, centre name and number, and examiner's name are announced at the start of every CD. If recording digitally, this information should be recorded once and saved as the first file on the CD/USB
- the candidate's name and number are announced at the start of each test
- the topic area is announced at the beginning of each task.

The recording must not be paused or stopped during a test. If an emergency makes this unavoidable, a report should be written immediately for the Qualification Delivery and Award Manager for International GCSE MFL at Pearson. The report must explain the circumstances and any subsequent action taken. A copy of the report must be included with the oral tests sent to the examiner.

### **Authentication of candidate responses**

The teacher/examiner and the candidate must sign the declaration of authentication on the candidate cover sheet (see Appendix 6 Candidate cover sheet (Paper 3: Speaking)), confirming that the work is the candidate's own. Any candidate unable to provide an authentication statement will receive zero marks for the component.

For any further questions, please contact [teachinglanguages@pearson.com](mailto:teachinglanguages@pearson.com)