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# Moderator's Report Principal Moderator Feedback

November 2023

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE  
in English Language (4EB1)  
Paper E Spoken Language Endorsement

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This was the first November series for the Spoken Language Endorsement (SLE) for these specifications, with the November series replacing the January series.

The SLE is optional for candidates taking these specifications (4EA1 and 4EB1). There were just a few entries this series but it is really pleasing to see how teachers clearly value the opportunities the SLE provides and it is inspiring to see so many candidates rising to the challenges it offers, presenting sometimes difficult subjects with confidence, skill and engagement.

Those who opt to take the Spoken Language Endorsement must provide an oral presentation on a topic of their choice. This must be presented to an audience, who should provide feedback and ask questions. The candidate must respond to these questions, and the whole process should take no longer than 10 minutes.

Candidates are awarded one of three grades – Pass, Merit or Distinction – or are otherwise Not Classified. In order to achieve a particular grade, a candidate must meet all the criteria for that grade. The key words to describe each approach in each grade are 'straightforward' for a Pass; 'challenging' for a Merit; 'sophisticated' for a Distinction.

There is some flexibility in the form a presentation may take for the SLE. This series, some candidates chose to speak as an individual, directly or remotely, to their audience on their prepared topic. There were also some candidates who adopted the interview style approach, while others delivered their presentation as part of a pair. When taking part in the SLE in a pair or group, candidates should just ensure that, individually, they provide sufficient evidence during the activity to demonstrate the SLE descriptors.

It is important to remember that, to access any of the grades, there must be evidence of candidates responding to questions. This series, it was pleasing to see that all candidates were asked and responded to questions, with sufficient time given over to this part of the activity. It was also noticeable that questions tended to be 'open' and formulated to prompt candidates into expanding their ideas. In order to achieve a Distinction grade, candidates should answer questions 'perceptively' and it is therefore important for questions to be appropriately demanding.

It appeared that all candidates had chosen their own topics, albeit, no doubt, with a degree of sensitive guidance from their teachers, and the vast majority alighted on a subject which offered a degree of challenge or debate.

**Pass.** Pass grade presentations are those which express straightforward ideas, information and/or feelings. These are often factual reports of a researched area of interest, or one that is close to the candidate's own experience. Examples include accounts of a hobby, or favourite sport, or pet or holiday, where there is no dimension of complexity or discussion.

Candidates awarded a Pass this series presented on topics including 'The band BTS' and 'Why students should not have to complete homework'.

Candidates communicated intelligibly and responded appropriately to questions.

**Merit.** Merit candidates express challenging ideas and their range of vocabulary increases as a result. Their presentations are more securely organised and they may well have a more pronounced interaction with their audience. Often, there is more complexity, discussion or debate and candidates may set themselves a question or conundrum to explore.

Those candidates awarded a Merit this series presented challenging material and ideas in a structured and purposeful way. Topics included 'Is news media bad for mental health?' and 'Why weightlifting should not be allowed at 15 years old'. Many candidates referred to notes but accepted that they must not allow these to dominate and to prevent regular eye contact with the audience. A range of vocabulary was used and questions were answered in some detail.

**Distinction.** Distinction candidates express sophisticated ideas using sophisticated vocabulary. Their choice of topic, and their approach to it, are therefore of the utmost importance, although the range of potential subjects is probably infinite.

There were some profound presentations awarded a Distinction grade this series, with topics including 'Artificial Intelligence' and 'Gender Inequality'. Sophisticated ideas were expressed using a sophisticated but accessible range of vocabulary and the candidates used a range of strategies to engage their audience – rhetorical questions and other verbal devices to involve the audience but also variety of tone and non-verbal gestures and facial expressions. Candidates listened carefully to audience questions, responding perceptively and in sufficient depth.

The great majority of candidates had been graded accurately by centres, who applied the criteria carefully. There were exceptions, however, and these tended to arise when candidates were awarded Distinctions even though they had made no attempt to use 'an effective range of strategies to engage their audience'. Often, this was because a candidate had prepared an interesting and well-expressed presentation but read from a script and took very little account of the people who were listening to them. Also, a few candidates delivered a presentation on a topic that was not deemed to be sufficiently demanding for the top grade.

A number of candidates chose to use slides to support their talks and, although illustrative slides can sometimes add to the impact of what a candidate says, they can often be a distraction, with candidates tending to address the slides rather than their audience.

For further guidance and feedback on presentations centres should revisit the summer 2023 report.

**Points to remember when submitting samples are as follows:**

- SLE grades and video-recordings must be submitted for students.
- Presentations should be uploaded to the Learner Work Transfer (LWT) portal. It is important that the 'submit' button is pressed to complete the process.
- Recordings should be labelled correctly. The grade should be included in the file name as well as centre and candidate numbers and candidate name. The specification provides exact details of how recordings should be labelled.
- It is also very useful if each candidate introduces him or herself by name and number at the start of each video.
- Care should be taken with the placement of the recording device to ensure that the candidate and all questioners are audible.
- An assessment record sheet should be completed for each student and the record sheets of students whose work is submitted should be uploaded to the Administration Material section of the LWT portal (ideally as a single PDF).
- Please ensure also that all work is uploaded to the LWT and all grades entered on Edexcel online by the given deadline date.
- It is very important that the SLE submission guidance for centres is adhered to.