



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2025

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

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Introduction

This was yet another successful series for the Spoken Language Endorsement (SLE) and the first series for centres entering candidates for the modular version of 4EA1 (4WEA1). Centres have continued to do an excellent job in preparing candidates, and candidates should be congratulated for their performance.

The SLE is optional for candidates taking these specifications (4EA1, 4WEA1 and 4EB1). It was pleasing to see the number of candidates entered this series, which is indicative of how much they, and their teachers, clearly value the opportunities the SLE provides. As has been the case in previous series, it was tremendous to see so many candidates rising to the challenges the SLE offers, often presenting complex 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, the majority of candidates chose to speak as an individual, directly or remotely, to their audience on their prepared topic. There were some candidates who adopted the interview style approach, while a few delivered their presentation as part of a pair. Remember, when candidates take part in the SLE in a pair or group, they 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 the vast majority of 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. There was evidence of teachers stepping in to ask sufficiently demanding questions, which is good practice to ensure that candidates can achieve the highest grade.

Candidate performance

As mentioned earlier in this report, there were some excellent videos viewed this series. Candidates should be congratulated for their efforts.

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 that offered a degree of challenge or debate.

Pass. Pass grade presentations are those that 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, favourite sport or holiday, where there is no dimension of complexity or discussion.

Candidates awarded a Pass this series presented on topics including their favourite hobbies, a sports team they support and other matters of personal interest. Candidates generally communicated intelligibly and responded appropriately to questions. There was some over reliance on scripts with many of the candidates awarded a Pass grade, with some reading from their script for the entire presentation. Candidates should remember to engage their audience. Cue cards might help prevent candidates from merely reading.

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 'Should children be banned from social media?' and 'Should children have to take part in sport?'. 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. A number of candidates awarded this grade may well have achieved a Distinction had they been a little more confident in their delivery or further developed their ideas.

Distinction. Distinction candidates express complex 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 many candidates choosing to present on topics relating to advancements in technology, particularly artificial intelligence. Complex ideas were expressed using a sophisticated, but accessible, range of vocabulary and the candidates used a variety of strategies to engage their audience. Rhetorical questions and other verbal devices were deployed to involve the audience, in addition to a variety of tone and non-verbal gestures and facial

expressions. Candidates listened carefully to audience questions, responding perceptively and in sufficient depth. Candidates should be commended for their confident styles of delivery, with many candidates speaking without the aid of notes.

The great majority of candidates had been graded accurately by centres, who applied the criteria carefully. As has been the case in previous series, 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. When selecting a topic for a presentation, there should be careful thought to ensure that the topic is sufficiently complex to be able to fulfil the requirements 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.

Administration

Most of the samples were uploaded before the deadline, and centres are thanked for this. Please do remember to upload the assessment record sheets for the candidates in the sample. On that note, please make sure that the updated assessment record sheet is used, which includes a statement on the use of artificial intelligence. This form can be downloaded from the relevant qualification page of our website.

The majority of files were in the appropriate format. However, some did not adhere to the file types stipulated in the guidance. Please do use one of the formats in the guidance as, otherwise, it can take much longer for monitors to be able to access the files and complete the sampling process. It might also result in a centre receiving a request from a monitor to re-upload the videos in an appropriate format, which can add unnecessary time to the process for centres.

Centres are also reminded to ensure that candidates can be seen and heard clearly. The vast majority of videos this series were filmed to a high standard but there were a few videos that were very difficult to hear and see. It might be that the recording equipment could be placed closer to candidates in future.

Finally, centres are just reminded to ensure that the file name for each video contains the centre number, candidate number, name of the candidate and the grade awarded.

Final comments

Thank you for choosing the Pearson Edexcel Spoken Language Endorsement. Candidates should be proud of their achievements and their grades, which provide evidence of their excellent, and often inspirational, communication skills. Well done to centres for preparing candidates in such a thorough manner.

Points to remember when submitting samples are as follows:

- SLE grades and a sample of video-recordings must be submitted for candidates.
- 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 candidate and the record sheets of candidates whose work is submitted should be uploaded to the Administration Material section of the LWT portal (ideally as a single PDF). Please remember to use the updated version of the form, which includes a statement on artificial intelligence.
- 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. This includes the acceptable formats for videos to be saved in.

