

GCSE [revised] Modern Languages Specification: Clarification information [Q&A]

If additional clarification is required in relation to any of the sections contained within this document, please contact the CCEA Officer[s] for GCSE Modern Languages.

GENERAL

Q: Do candidates have to have studied the target language at Key Stage 3 to undertake the GCSE qualification?

A: *No. Candidates do not need to have reached a particular level of attainment before beginning to study this GCSE qualification. However, the specification builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed within the Northern Ireland Curriculum at Key Stage 3.*

Q: Is this qualification a linear course or a unitised course?

A: *This specification is a unitised course.*

Two units are available from Summer 2018 [Reading and Writing] and all four units are available from Summer 2019 onwards [Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing].

Candidates must take at least 40% of the qualification in the year they wish to have the qualification awarded. This is the '40% terminal rule' which applies to all GCSE qualifications.

Q: What is the 40% terminal rule?

A: *This is a generic requirement for all GCSEs. Candidates must take 40% of the qualification in the final year of the two year course. Any two units together will fulfil the requirements of the 40% terminal rule as each individual unit is worth 25% of the qualification.*

Q: Do candidates have to enter all Foundation Tiers or all Higher Tiers?

A: *No. There is a flexible pattern of entry [Foundation and Higher Tiers] for the Listening [Unit 1], Reading [Unit 3] and Writing [Unit 4] examination papers. Candidates can enter whichever tier is best for them. The Speaking examination [Unit 2] is single tier entry for all candidates.*

Q: What is the maximum subject grade a candidate entering all tiered units at Foundation Tier can achieve?

A: *Grade B is the highest overall grade achievable using this route.*

Q: If a candidate sits a unit at Foundation Tier, are they able to re-sit that unit at Higher Tier?

If a candidate sits a unit at Higher Tier, are they able to re-sit that unit at Foundation Tier?

A: *Yes. A candidate can only re-sit a unit once but the re-sit can be taken at either Foundation Tier or Higher Tier [the tiered units are Listening, Reading and Writing].*

Q: What is the outcome if candidates enter some units at Higher Tier and some units at Foundation Tier?

A: *Candidates can ‘mix and match’ tiers. Candidates may take one or more units at Higher Tier and/or one or more units at Foundation Tier together with the un-tiered Speaking unit and receive a subject grade. However, in entering one or more units at Foundation Tier, candidates are not able to access the full 400 UMS and this will restrict the grade which can be achieved in the final qualification award.*

Q: When can candidates get their GCSE award?

A: *This specification is for first teaching in September 2017 with the first full GCSE awards available from Summer 2019 onwards.*

Q: How will candidates and centres know if there are any changes to this specification?

A: *If there are any major changes, CCEA will notify centres in writing.*

The online version of the specification [available on the subject microsite] will always be the most up to date version. To view and download see www.ccea.org.uk.

Q: What skills are involved?

A: *There are four skills:*

- 1. Listening Unit 1 [AO1] – understand and respond to different types of spoken language*
- 2. Speaking Unit 2 [AO2] – communicate and interact effectively in speech*
- 3. Reading Unit 3 [AO3] – understand and respond to different types of written language*
- 4. Writing Unit 4 [AO4] – communicate in writing*

Q: What grades can candidates achieve?

A: *CCEA awards GCSE qualifications on a grade scale from A* to G. If a candidate does not attain a grade G or above, then their result is reported as unclassified [U].*

A*	A	B	C*	C	D	E	F	G	U
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Q: What grades can candidates achieve should they sit mixed tier papers in Listening, Reading and Writing?

A: Refer to the **REVISED GCSE Grading Scale**.

Q: What is the revised GCSE grading scale?

A: The A* grade has been re-aligned to reflect the level of achievement consistent with the grade 9 on the GCSE 9-1 grade scale. Grade A* will be awarded at subject level only and will no longer be issued as a notional grade at unit level.

A new C* grade has been introduced to align with the level of achievement consistent with grade 5 on the GCSE 9-1 grading model. The new C* will be awarded as a subject grade and also as a notional unit grade.

REVISED GCSE Grading Scale

GCSE GRADES AVAILABLE (UPPERCASE IS A FINAL GRADE, lower case a notional unit grade)			
SUBJECT LEVEL (Cash-in)	Un-tiered Unit: Speaking	Higher Tier Unit: Listening, Reading and Writing	Foundation Tier Unit: Listening, Reading and Writing
A*	Not available	Not available	Not available
A	a	a	Not available
B	b	b	Not available
C*	c*	c*	c*
C	c	c	c
D	d	d	d
E	e	Allowable e	e
F	f	Not available	f
G	g	Not available	g

*Each Modern Language unit will have a maximum of 100 uniform marks (total subject out of 400 uniform marks). Each of the **Listening, Reading and Writing** units will be available at Foundation and Higher tier. Learners entering a unit at Foundation tier can achieve no higher than a notional grade 'c*' on that unit and therefore the maximum available uniform mark available will be **one** below that required to achieve a notional grade 'b'.*

Q: How many Contexts for Learning are there?

A: *There are three Contexts for Learning:*

- 1. Context for Learning 1: Identity, Lifestyle and Culture*
- 2. Context for Learning 2: Local, National, International and Global Areas of Interest*
- 3. Context for Learning 3: School Life, Studies and the World of Work*

Q: What topics do the Contexts for Learning include?

A: *Each Context for Learning includes four main topic areas.*

Context for Learning 1 includes:

- Myself, my family, relationships and choices*
- Social media and new technology*
- Free time, leisure and daily routine*
- Culture, customs, festivals and celebrations*

Context for Learning 2 includes:

- My local area and the wider environment*
- Community involvement*
- Social and global issues*
- Travel and tourism*

Context for Learning 3 includes:

- My studies and school life*
- Extra-curricular activities*
- Part-time jobs and money management*
- Future plans and career*

Q: What Grammar and Structures will candidates be expected to know?

A: *The Specification sets out details for Grammar and Structures in Appendix 4.*

Q: Will CCEA be publishing a list of idiomatic phrases?

A: *No. It is preferable that use of language arises naturally as relevant and as appropriate. As these types of phrases occur naturally as part of the teaching experience, it would be more appropriate if teachers advised students on the use of language, highlighting and drawing attention to the most appropriate phrase(s) as relevant to the topic(s) being studied.*

Q: Will candidates be given a core vocabulary list?

A: *Yes. The Specification includes a Core Minimum Vocabulary List [Appendix 5] however, at both Foundation Tier and Higher Tier, candidates can expect to encounter some unfamiliar vocabulary in the questions and tasks set.*

Q: Can candidates re-sit any of the units?

A: *Yes. Candidates can re-sit individual units **once** before cash-in. The better of the two results will count towards the final GCSE grade, unless a unit is needed to meet the 40% terminal rule. In that case, the **most recent** mark will count, even if it is not the better result.*

Q: How do candidates and centres know what the grade boundaries are for each unit?

A: *After each Summer series, the raw mark grade boundaries are published on the CCEA GCSE Modern Languages microsites [French, German, Irish and Spanish].*

Q: Will there be exemplar materials available?

A: *Yes. Exemplar materials will be available via the GCSE subject microsite following the first series awarded [from Summer 2019 onwards].*

UNIT 1: LISTENING [FOUNDATION & HIGHER TIERS]

GENERAL

Q: When is the Listening examination available?

A: *The Listening examination [Unit 1] is available from Summer 2019 and is then available on a yearly basis from 2019 onwards.*

Q: What is the Listening examination paper worth towards a full GCSE?

A: *The Listening examination paper is worth 25% of the full GCSE qualification.*

Q: How long is the Listening examination paper?

A: *The Foundation Tier Listening examination paper lasts approximately 35 minutes.*

The Higher Tier Listening examination paper lasts approximately 45 minutes.

Q: How many marks are there for the Listening examination paper?

A: *There are 60 marks available for the Listening paper.*

Q: How many questions are on the Listening examination paper?

A: *The Foundation Tier Listening examination paper has 12 questions. The Higher Tier Listening examination paper has 12 questions. Four of these questions are common to both papers.*

Q: Will all Contexts and topics be covered in the Listening examination papers?

A: *Yes. All Contexts and topics must be covered within the examination papers across the lifetime of the Specification.*

Q: Do candidates have time to read through the paper before they have to answer the questions?

A: *Yes. The CD will start and give instructions and then candidates will have five minutes to read through the paper before the recorded passages begin.*

Q: Will candidates have to answer questions in English?

A: *Yes. Section A [8 questions], on both Foundation Tier and Higher Tier question papers, requires: answers/responses in English [for example writing words into boxes/spaces/gaps]; completing sentences in English; and non-verbal responses [for example ticking boxes, writing the correct letter in a box/space/gap].*

Q: Will candidates have to answer questions in the target language?

A: *Yes. Section B [4 questions], on both Foundation Tier and Higher Tier question papers, requires: answers/responses in the target language [for example writing words into boxes/spaces/gaps]; completing sentences in the target language; and non-verbal responses [for example ticking boxes, writing the correct letter in a box/space/gap].*

Q: Why are there some rubrics in the target language i.e. Section B?

A: *There is a requirement that a set percentage of questions must be set in English and that a set percentage of questions must be set in the target language thus the rubrics reflect that. Therefore the question papers have, therefore, been set out with Section A questions and answers in English and Section B questions and answers in the target language so that candidates can more easily navigate through the question paper[s].*

Q: In the Listening paper/s, candidates have to answer some questions in the target language. Will candidates be penalised for incorrect spelling in the target language?

A: *Not necessarily. Candidates will gain the mark/s as long as the target language answer/response is recognisable to a native/fluent speaker and is recognisable as the target language word or phrase which correctly/appropriately answers the question.*

Candidates will not gain any marks for answers/responses in English or for answers/responses which include English words where the response is to be in the target language.

Q: How long will candidates get to write in their answers?

A:

Foundation Listening:

Questions 1 - 8 have five second pauses between repeat readings and ten second pauses between questions.

Questions 9 - 12 have seven second pauses between repeat readings and twelve second pauses between questions.

Higher Listening:

Questions 1 - 8 have five second pauses between repeat readings and ten second pauses between questions.

Questions 9 - 12 have seven second pauses between repeat readings and twelve second pauses between questions.

- Q: Will candidates be expected to answer and/or respond using full sentences?**
A: *At the start of every question, candidates should read each rubric very carefully. Where full sentences are required, this will be clearly stated in the rubrics.*
- Q: Can candidates use a dictionary during the Listening examination?**
A: *No. The use of a dictionary is not permitted during the Listening examination.*
- Q: Will the Foundation and Higher Listening SAMs Transcripts be made available via the GCSE subject microsites?**
A: *Yes. The Foundation Listening and Higher Listening SAMs Transcripts will be made available via the GCSE subject microsite during the first year of teaching. The Transcripts will be recorded by native/fluent speakers.*
- Q: Can candidates re-sit the Listening unit?**
A: *Yes. Candidates have one opportunity to re-sit the Listening unit at either Foundation Tier or Higher Tier.*

UNIT 2: SPEAKING [SINGLE TIER]

SPEAKING: GENERAL

Q: When is the Speaking examination available?

A: *The Speaking examination [Unit 2] is available from Summer 2019 and this is available on a yearly basis from 2019 onwards.*

Q: What is the Speaking examination paper worth towards the full GCSE?

A: *The Speaking examination paper is worth 25% of the full GCSE qualification.*

Q: Who will conduct the Speaking examination?

A: *The subject teacher will conduct the Speaking examination.*

Q: Is the Speaking examination recorded?

A: *Yes. The Speaking examination is recorded by the teacher who conducts the examination and the recording is sent to CCEA to be marked.*

Q: When will the Speaking examination period take place?

A: *The Speaking examination period will be timetabled within the JCQ Common Timetable framework and this is published on the CCEA website in advance of the Summer Examination Series. It is usually during April and May, however candidates are advised to check the relevant CCEA Summer Series timetable.*

Q: Is there a Foundation Tier and a Higher Tier of entry for the Speaking unit?

A: *No. The Speaking unit is un-tiered. Speaking is a single tier examination.*

Q: How many marks are there for the Speaking examination?

A: *There are 60 marks available for the Speaking examination:*

Role-play 1 carries 10 marks

Role-play 2 carries 10 marks

Conversation Topic 1 carries 20 marks

Conversation Topic 2 carries 20 marks

Q: Will the Speaking examination cover all of the three Contexts for Learning?

A: *Yes. All Contexts and topics must be covered within the Speaking examination.*

The two Role-plays will be on topics from one of the three Contexts for Learning.

Conversation Topic 1 will be on one topic from one of the other two Contexts for Learning.

Conversation Topic 2 will be on one topic from the remaining Context for Learning.

In relation to the Speaking examination, the three Contexts will be covered within each examination series:

- a) Conversation Topic 1 is pre-released by CCEA and will be set on one of the three Contexts for Learning*
- b) Role-plays are selected by the candidate and will relate to one of the three Contexts for Learning [not the Contexts covered in a) and c)]*
- c) Conversation Topic 2 is selected by the teacher conducting the Speaking examination and must be taken from the remaining Context [not the Contexts covered in a) and b)].*

Q: How long does the Speaking examination last?

A:

- Candidates will have one hour in normal classroom time to prepare one of the conversation topics. The teacher will decide when this will take place.*
- Just before the formal Speaking examination takes place, candidates will have ten minutes to prepare the two Role-play responses.*
- The formal Speaking examination lasts between seven and twelve minutes [12 minutes is the maximum time permitted for the Speaking examination].*
- During the Speaking examination, candidates will have two minutes to give their responses to Role-play 1 and candidates will have two minutes to give their responses to Role-play 2.*
- Candidates will have four minutes to discuss Conversation Topic 1 and four minutes to discuss Conversation Topic 2.*

Q: How will the sessions work for Speaking?

A: *There is clarification within the SAMs booklet in relation to the conduct of the daily sessions. This is detailed within the Teacher's Booklet section of the SAMS.*

Q: Can candidates use a dictionary during the formal Speaking examination?

A: *No. The use of a dictionary is not permitted during the formal Speaking examination.*

SPEAKING: ROLE-PLAYS

Q: How will candidates know which Role-plays they have to do?

A: *The teacher will offer each candidate two sets of Role-play cards [face-down on the table]. Candidates will be able to see the Context for Learning titles but they will not be able to see the two Role-play scenarios. Candidates will select one set and the teacher will remove the other set. Candidates will then have ten minutes to plan their responses.*

Q: When candidates do their ten minute Role-play preparation, can they write down their answers?

A: *Yes. Candidates will use a Candidate Role-play Response Sheet to plan out and write down their answers. Candidates can use this Role-play Response Sheet in the Speaking examination to help them. Candidates are not allowed to use any other sheets, resources or materials. Candidates can only use their Candidate Role-play Response sheet within the examination.*

Q: How do teachers ensure that the candidates have a choice of Role-Play scenarios?

A: *Role-plays are provided for two of the three Contexts for Learning. Each candidate will select their Role-plays from one Context therefore there is a choice to be made. Therefore, not all candidates will necessarily do the same Role-plays. There is also a number of sessions built into each day and the materials are varied according to each particular session.*

Q: Are the Role-play scenarios differentiated?

A: *No. The Role-play scenarios are not differentiated. Speaking is an un-tiered unit. Responses will be marked against the CCEA Mark Schemes. These are detailed in the SAMs booklet available on the GCSE [revised] Modern Languages microsite.*

Q: Do the Role-play responses require phrases or full sentences?

A: *Each Role-play will have five sections requiring a question, a statement or an answer/response from the candidate.*

Candidates should read the rubrics/instructions very carefully and then prepare their responses. It may be that some responses require phrases and that other responses require full sentences.

On some occasions, the candidate will be required to start the Role-play and on some occasions, the teacher will be required to start the Role-play. The Role-play Card will indicate who starts off each scenario. [Candidates should refer to the SAMs for examples.]

In the actual Speaking examination, candidates should refer to the information on each Role-play Card.

Q: What level of detail is required in the Role-play responses?

A: *Refer to the Mark Scheme in the SAMs booklet. This details the mark bands and expected level of response against each of the mark bands.*

SPEAKING: CONVERSATION

SPEAKING: CONVERSATION TOPIC 1 [PREPARATION]

Q: How will candidates know what their Conversation Topic 1 title is?

A: *Each September CCEA sets and pre-releases the Conversation Topic 1 title in advance of the Summer examination series. This will be published on the CCEA GCSE [revised] subject microsite within the Speaking section.*

Q: What format will the Speaking Conversation 1 pre-release topic take?

A: *Each Language will have a Conversation Topic 1 title pre-released in the September prior to the Summer examination series. These titles will be available via the CCEA GCSE [revised] subject microsites and will take the form of a title comprising of a phrase or sentence.*

Q: Will the Conversation Topic 1 pre-released title be the same for each Language?

A: *No. Each Language will publish a different Conversation 1 Topic title.*

Q: When candidates do their one hour preparation for Conversation Topic 1, can they keep additional notes?

A: *No. The teacher will give each candidate a CCEA Candidate Preparation Sheet for their preparation session. Candidates are only allowed to write 40 words on this sheet. The 40 words must be recognisable single words, short phrases or sentences up to six words in length. Candidates are not allowed to use images, diagrams, graphics or pictures.*

The Candidate Preparation Sheet for Conversation Topic 1 can only be completed during the one hour classroom preparation session.

This preparation session is at the discretion of the classroom teacher. It must be undertaken prior to the Speaking examination at a time convenient to the classroom teacher and appropriate to learning and teaching.

Candidates will have the permitted resources during the one hour Candidate Conversation Topic 1 preparation session.

There are no restrictions regarding making notes on these resources however candidates are not permitted to write additional notes on the Candidate Preparation Sheet.

*The teacher can also provide a photocopy of the Candidate Preparation Sheet for each candidate to keep [once it has been signed, authenticated and completed] but candidates CANNOT bring this photocopy into the examination. The teacher will give each candidate back their **original** Candidate Preparation Sheet on the day of and at the time of the Conversation Topic 1 element of the Speaking examination and candidates can only use their **original** sheet.*

Q: What exactly is required to be written on the Candidate Preparation Sheet?

A: *The Candidate Preparation Sheet details what exactly is permitted on the sheet. Refer to the Specification and the Teacher's Booklet within the SAMs booklet for further details.*

Q: Do candidates have to do the one hour preparation in class or can they do some of it at home?

A: *Candidates can only do the one hour preparation in normal class time as arranged by their classroom teacher. Candidates cannot do any of this preparation work at home as it must be done under direct teacher supervision.*

Q: Do candidates have to do their preparation session on their own?

A: *No. When candidates do their supervised preparation session in class, they can work as individuals or in pairs or in a group.*

Q: What resources are permitted during the Candidate Preparation session?

A: *The Specification, SAMs and Candidate Preparation Sheets detail what exactly is permitted. Refer to the Specification and the Teacher's Booklet within the SAMs booklet for further details.*

Q: During the supervised planning classroom session, can candidates use some books to help them plan the Conversation Topic 1?

A: *Yes. Candidates can use GCSE textbooks, study guides, classwork books, homework books and the CCEA Vocabulary list but candidates **must not use a dictionary**.*

Q: Can teachers correct the 40 words if candidates have made mistakes?

A: *No. Teachers are allowed to give guidance but teachers are not allowed to correct any of the written work done in this session.*

Q: Can candidates take their Candidate Preparation Sheet home with them?

A: *No. At the end of the one hour preparation session, candidate and teacher must sign the sheet to authenticate that the work completed is that of the candidate and then the teacher will keep the sheet confidentially and securely until the day of the formal Speaking examination.*

Q: Following the one hour preparation session, can candidates be given a photocopy of their Candidate Preparation Sheet to keep until the day of the examination or can candidates retain a copy of the Candidate Preparation Sheet to revise from between the Preparation Session and the day of the examination?

A: *Yes. Teachers can provide candidates with a photocopy of their own Candidate Preparation Sheet to keep [once it has been signed, authenticated and completed] but candidates CANNOT bring this photocopy into the examination.*

*The teacher will give candidates back their **original** Candidate Preparation Sheet on the day and at the time of the Conversation Topic 1 element of the Speaking examination and candidates can only use their **original** sheet.*

*Candidates will be given their **original** sheet back **at the start** of the Conversation [Topic 1].*

Q: In relation to Conversation Topic 1, do teachers retain a copy of the Candidate Preparation Sheet between the Preparation Session and the day of the examination?

A: *Yes. Refer to the Teacher's Booklet [SAMs]. Teachers **must** retain all of the Candidate Preparation Sheets and ensure that they are stored safely, securely and confidentially until the day of the Speaking examination.*

SPEAKING: CONVERSATION TOPIC 1

Q: When will candidates get their Candidate Preparation Sheets back?

A: *The teacher conducting Conversation Topic 1 will give each candidate their **original** Candidate Preparation Sheet back **at the start** of the Conversation element of the Speaking examination.*

Q: Can candidates all be asked the same questions during the Conversation Topic 1 section of the Speaking examination?

A: *The conversation should be a natural, genuine interaction/exchange within the conversation. A natural exchange/interaction would not normally follow exactly the same pattern from candidate to candidate. Within a class group, even on the same topic, teacher and candidate would rarely be posing and responding to exactly the same questions during a natural and genuine conversation.*

Refer to the Mark Scheme in relation to what is required from candidates in order to access the various bands. Candidates should be afforded the best opportunity to succeed. Teachers should respect the spirit and ethos of the Specification.

SPEAKING: CONVERSATION TOPIC 2

Q: How does the teacher conduct Conversation Topic 2?

A: *The three Contexts for Learning must be covered within the Speaking examination.*

One of the three Contexts will have been covered in the Role-plays, one of the three Contexts will have been covered in Conversation Topic 1 [the CCEA pre-released topic] and the teacher will finally conduct Conversation Topic 2 from one of the topics within the remaining Context for Learning.

The teacher should select a topic from the remaining Context for Learning. This can be any of the four topics listed in the Specification within that remaining Context. There is no restriction in relation to the topic covered with the candidate – centres may use the same topic for all candidates [within the parameters of the Specification] or select a different topic from the Context for each individual candidate or groups of candidates.

Good practice would be that candidates are asked varied questions which arise naturally from what they are saying – not from a restricted/set bank of pre-prepared questions – so that the conversation is a natural and genuine interaction/exchange. Good practice would not be all candidates being asked exactly the same set of questions in the same order as this would not constitute a natural/genuine interaction/exchange.

If further clarification is required, contact the CCEA Education Manager for Modern Languages who can provide further support/clarification.

SPEAKING: – GENERAL

Q: Is there a particular number of topics which should be covered in the Conversation?

A: *Conversation Topic 1 is pre-set and covers one of the three Contexts for Learning so **one** pre-set topic will be covered. In Conversation Topic 2, **one** topic will be selected by the teacher from the remaining Context for Learning [i.e. the Context not covered in Conversation Topic 1 and not covered in the Role-plays].*

Q: How many questions should candidates expect in the Conversation [Conversation Topic 1 and Conversation Topic 2]?

A: *There is no prescribed/set number of questions. However the teacher should conduct the Conversation [Topic 1 and Topic 2] in such a way as to facilitate*

a natural interaction/exchange in order to enable the candidate to demonstrate their abilities and access the highest mark bands possible.

It should be a natural, genuine interaction/exchange within the conversation. It should not resemble a quizzing of the candidate with high levels of questions nor should it be a series of mini presentations by the candidate with very little interaction with the teacher.

Also refer to the Mark Scheme – the candidate should ask some [short] questions within the Conversation to make it a natural/genuine exchange. Candidates should be afforded the best opportunities to succeed.

Q: Will there be question banks or lists of possible questions published for Conversation Topic 1 and Conversation Topic 2?

A: *No. CCEA will not publish question banks/lists of questions. There is a range of Support Material which will include ideas for classroom practice. Good practice is where teachers adapt and vary their questioning to enable the candidates to demonstrate their ability and to engage in a natural and genuine interaction/exchange.*

Q: The Speaking Mark Scheme requires that each candidate ‘asks and answers’ questions during the Conversation element. Can these be short questions e.g. ‘And you?’ or will candidates have to use a full sentence with a verb?

A: *The questions posed by candidates should contribute to the natural interaction/exchange. They should arise naturally from and fit naturally into the Conversation. Candidates may use short question phrases such as ‘And you?’ or longer questions/sentences, as appropriate. There should be some variation within the questions e.g. it is not a natural/genuine conversation/interaction if the candidate repeatedly uses the same phrase or sentence.*

Q: Does the teacher have to answer the question/s posed by the candidate?

A: *The teacher is conducting the Speaking examination so they should respond in some way to the candidate by replying to the question posed and/or enabling the conversation to be progressed appropriately within the natural interaction/exchange.*

Q: How will the Speaking Conversation Topic 1 and Conversation Topic 2 be marked if they are below the minimum time?

A: *The timings are set within the Specification and should be planned for and respected. The Conversation Topics will be marked according to the CCEA Mark Scheme available in the SAMs.*

Candidates should be advised of the time parameters so that they can prepare appropriately and endeavour to access the highest mark bands possible.

Teachers conducting the Speaking examinations must respect the time limits particularly in relation to the maximum time limit of 12 minutes for the overall examination.

Should a candidate not reach the minimum time, this may limit their potential to access higher marks by not being able to demonstrate their skills and capabilities.

Q: What happens to the Candidate Response Sheet and Candidate Role-play Response Sheet after the formal Speaking examination?

A: *Teachers must retain these sheets confidentially and securely until after the end of the Enquiry About Results process in case CCEA need to review these sheets.*

Q: Can candidates re-sit the Speaking examination?

A: *Yes. Candidates have one opportunity to re-sit the Speaking unit however they will not be able to use the Conversation Topic 1 they used in their original examination. Candidates will have to use the pre-released Conversation Topic 1 relevant to the re-sit Summer series.*

UNIT 3: READING [FOUNDATION TIER & HIGHER TIER]

GENERAL

Q: When is the Reading examination available?

A: *The Reading examination [Unit 3] is available from Summer 2018 and is then available on a yearly basis from 2018 onwards.*

Q: What is the Reading examination paper worth towards the full GCSE?

A: *The Reading examination paper is worth 25% of the full GCSE qualification.*

Q: How long is the Reading examination paper?

A: *The Foundation Reading examination paper lasts 50 minutes.
The Higher Reading examination paper lasts one hour.*

Q: How many marks are there for the Reading examination paper?

A: *There are 60 marks available for the Reading examination paper.*

Q: How many questions are on the Reading examination papers?

A: *The Foundation Tier examination paper has 12 questions. The Higher Tier examination paper has 12 questions. Four of these questions are common to both papers.*

Q: Will candidates have to answer questions in English?

A: *Yes. Section A [8 questions], on both Foundation Tier and Higher Tier question papers, requires: answers/responses in English [for example writing words into boxes/spaces/gaps]; completing sentences in English; translating short sentences from the target language into English; and non-verbal responses [for example ticking boxes, writing the correct letter in a box/space/gap].*

Q: Will candidates have to answer questions in the target language?

A: *Yes. In Section B [4 questions], on both Foundation Tier and Higher Tier question papers, requires: answer/responses in the target language [for example writing words into boxes/spaces/gaps]; completing sentences in the target language; and non-verbal responses [for example ticking boxes, writing the correct letter in a box/space/gap].*

Q: Why are there some rubrics in the target language i.e. Section B?

A: *There is a requirement that a set percentage of questions must be included in English and that a set percentage of questions must be included in the target*

language thus the rubrics reflect that. The question papers have therefore been set out with Section A questions and answers in English and Section B questions and answers in the target language so that candidates can more easily navigate through the question paper[s].

Q: Can candidates use a dictionary during the Reading examination?

A: *No. The use of a dictionary is not permitted during the Reading examination.*

Q: Can candidates re-sit the Reading unit?

A: *Yes. Candidates have one opportunity to re-sit the Reading unit at either Foundation Tier or Higher Tier.*

UNIT 4: WRITING [FOUNDATION & HIGHER TIER]

GENERAL

Q: When is the Writing examination available?

A: *The Writing examination [Unit 4] is available from Summer 2018 and is then available on a yearly basis from 2018 onwards.*

Q: What is the Writing examination paper worth towards the full GCSE?

A: *The Writing examination paper is worth 25% of the GCSE qualification.*

Q: How long is the Writing examination paper?

A: *The Foundation Writing examination paper lasts one hour.
The Higher Writing examination paper lasts 1 hour 15 minutes.*

Q: How many marks are there for the Writing examination paper?

A: *There are 60 marks available for the Writing paper.*

Q: How many questions are on the Writing examination paper?

A: *The Foundation Tier Writing examination question paper has 4 questions.
The Higher Tier Writing examination question paper has 4 questions. One of these questions is common to both papers.*

Q: What type of questions are on the Writing examination papers?

A: *The Foundation Tier Writing paper has four questions.*

- 1. a listing/short phrase task;*
- 2. a short phrase/sentence response task;*
- 3. the translation of short sentences from English into the target language;*
and
- 4. one structured, extended writing task in the target language [one from a choice of three].*

The Higher Tier Writing paper has four questions.

- 1. a short phrase/sentence response task;*
- 2. short responses in the target language to one or more pieces of text;*
- 3. the translation of short sentences from English into the target language;*
and
- 4. one structured, extended writing task in the target language [one from a choice of three].*

- Q:** In the Writing examination question paper/s, will candidates have to answer any questions in English?
- A:** *No. All responses will be in the target language. No marks will be given for responses in English.*
- Q:** Will the extended writing question [Foundation Tier Writing and Higher Tier Writing Question 4] have set questions on each of the three Contexts for Learning?
- A:** *Yes. There will always be three questions with one question taken from each of the three Contexts for Learning.*
- Q:** Will the set bullet points in Writing Foundation Tier Question 4 and the set bullet points in Writing Higher Tier Question 4 be the same?
- A:** *Not necessarily. These are tiered question papers so the topics and corresponding bullet points will have variations within the parameters of the Foundation Tier and Higher Tier question papers.*
- Q:** Should the set bullet points be addressed equally?
- A:** *Yes. Candidates should endeavour to address the bullet points as equally as possible because the Mark Scheme requires that responses are ‘equally balanced against the bullet points’.*
- Q:** How much development should go into each bullet point in Writing Question 4?
- A:** *In Writing Foundation Tier and Writing Higher Tier Question 4 it is important that candidates ensure that their approach addresses all of the set bullet points.*
- Refer to the Mark Scheme and the mark band descriptors. The descriptors will provide details as to what candidates should endeavour to include within their bullet points in order to access the various mark bands.*
- Q:** Is there a word limit for the Writing examination paper Question 4 at Foundation Tier and Higher Tier?
- A:** *No. There are no recommended word counts or limits as the revised examinations are time bound. It is also important that candidates are fully aware of the Writing Foundation and Higher Mark Scheme for Writing papers Question 4 as this will provide details of the requirements for the mark bands.*
- Q:** How will Foundation Tier and Higher Writing Tier Question 4 be marked? Will each bullet point be individually marked?
- A:** *Refer to the Mark Scheme contained in the SAMs document. All bullet points must be addressed. Each bullet point will be reviewed against the Mark Scheme for Communication and Grammar & Structures and then a final*

holistic band will be assigned in line with the Mark Scheme for Communication and Grammar & Structures.

Q: Can candidates use a dictionary during the Writing examination papers?

A: *No. The use of a dictionary is not permitted during the Writing examination papers.*

Q: Can candidates re-sit the Writing unit?

A: *Yes. Candidates have one opportunity to re-sit the Writing unit at either Foundation Tier or Higher Tier.*