



## Test Format | Part 3 (*The Discussion*)

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- between 4 to 5 minutes
- the examiner will ask further questions which are connected to the topics in part 2
- this part is the opportunity to talk about more abstract issues and ideas

## Criteria

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Each of the four criteria counts equally. Around the beginning of Part 1, the examiner will write down a band score for each of the four criteria (*it means that the examiner already has an idea of what your band score more or less is*).

Then those numbers will be marked up or down during the test.

All the criteria count EQUALLY and are judged throughout all 3 parts of the speaking test.

The examiner then uses well defined criteria to assess your ability in the following areas:

Fluency and Coherence	Lexical Resource ( <i>Vocabulary</i> )
Grammatical Range and Accuracy	Pronunciation

At the end of the test, the interviewer calculates the average of the four scores and that number will represent your final speaking band score.

*example:*

Grammatical Range and Accuracy	7	
Lexical Resource ( <i>Vocabulary</i> )	7	
Pronunciation	6	= 24, which divided by 4 equals 6
Fluency and Coherence	4	Band Score 6

## Improving Band Score

### Fluency and Coherence

Mark Up for...	Mark Down for...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ speaking naturally <i>(try copying the speed of your examiner)</i> but <b>ONLY</b> if the pronunciation is good</li> <li>+ expanding answers with relevant information/details and using correct tenses and connectors</li> <li>+ answering the questions directly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- long, awkward pauses</li> <li>- not answering the question completely/correctly</li> </ul>

### Lexical Resource (*Vocabulary*)

Mark Up for...	Mark Down for...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ using a wide range of vocabulary</li> <li>+ using appropriate words</li> <li>+ correct usage of collocations and phrasal verbs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- using unfamiliar vocabulary words or using words incorrectly</li> <li>- always using common and simple vocabulary</li> </ul>

### Grammar

Mark Up for...	Mark Down for...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ knowing how to use the basic verb tenses well</li> <li>+ making complex sentences, using <u>conjunctions</u> and <u>connectors</u></li> <li>+ making complex structures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- inconsistent tenses</li> <li>- always using simple sentences</li> <li>- constructing complex sentences incorrectly</li> </ul>

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**Pronunciation**

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**Mark Up for...**

- + easy to understand pronunciation
- + speaking CLEARLY so that every word can be understood
- + proper intonation to emphasize a certain meaning or idea
- + basic word pronunciation
- + linked sounds and connected speech  
*(not pronounced sound for sound)*

**Mark Down for...**

- repeatedly mispronounced words
- very fast or very long answers  
*(poor pronunciation or no coherence)*

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**NO NEED FOR "American" OR "British" ACCENT**

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## REMINDEERS

- There are no 'right' answers to the questions asked; concentrate on how you give your answer.
- Practice answering the questions, but do not learn or memorize the answers.  
Examiners can tell if you have memorized your answers.
- Always try to explain what you mean, even if you can't find the specific word. Paraphrase.
- Always give Reasons, Effects, Comparisons, Supporting Examples, Experiences.
- Avoid always giving personal information and examples, this should be an abstract discussion.
- If the examiner asks a question that you don't understand, take control of the situation.  
Responding like this will show evidence of your communication skills.
  - ▶ If the examiner uses a word or phrase that you don't understand:  
*"Sorry but could you explain what you mean by ..."*  
*"I'm not familiar with that word/expression. Could you please explain what you mean?"*
  - ▶ If you didn't hear a part of the question:  
*"Excuse me, I didn't quite catch that. Could you say that again?"*  
*"I'm sorry, but would you mind repeating that?"*
  - ▶ If you want to clarify what the examiner asked:  
*"Do you mean ....."*  
*"When you say ....., do you mean/are you asking ....."?*
- Make sure you elaborate and give the necessary details.  
for example:  
*"One of my many hobbies is taking pictures. (Don't stop here! Add more details/information!)  
I find taking pictures fun and challenging. It is also a great way of keeping precious memories."*
- ALWAYS offer examples to help your explain a statement.  
for example:  
*"I need it for my studies. (Don't stop here! Add more details/information!) I've been offered  
a place at a university in New York to continue my studies on Business Management, but I need to prove my  
level of English is good enough."*

## Questions

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### Topic: COMMUNICATION

1.) What does 'effective communication' mean to you?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

2.) What do you think about the use of pictures in communication?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

3.) How will communication change in the future?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

**Topic: FAMILY**

1.) How much time do you spend together with other members of your family?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

2.) When do you get together with other members of your family?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

3.) Do people do things together as a family when there are festivals in your country?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

Answers

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Topic: COMMUNICATION

1.) What does 'effective communication' mean to you?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

**EXAMPLE:**

**(OPINION / REASON)** *"Effective? It means that the communication, whatever it is, explains the message clearly and tells the person receiving it what, how and when to do something. If it is effective, then it will be clear, logical and the recipient should have no further questions or a need to clarify any points, unless their circumstances are out of the ordinary."*

WORDS and PHRASES

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<i>further</i>	<i>logical</i>	<i>circumstances</i>	<i>message</i>	<i>tells</i>
<i>maybe</i>	<i>point</i>	<i>clarify</i>	<i>explain</i>	<i>recipient</i>
<i>clearly</i>	<i>clear</i>	<i>unless</i>	<i>person</i>	<i>receive</i>
<i>if anything...</i>	<i>it means...</i>	<i>whatever it is</i>	<i>out of the ordinary</i>	

2.) What do you think about the use of pictures in communication?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences.*

**EXAMPLE:**

(OPINION / EXAMPLE) *"They're great! Things like infographics can help explain ideas and concepts or display data in a much more accessible way. Pictures can also be quicker in terms of getting a message across rather than having to try and explain all the details in words. Using a picture, you are minimizing the chance of misunderstanding."*

**WORDS and PHRASES**

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<i>data</i>	<i>misunderstanding</i>	<i>picture</i>	<i>idea</i>	<i>quick</i>
<i>all</i>	<i>understand</i>	<i>display</i>	<i>accessible</i>	<i>explain</i>
<i>concept</i>	<i>detail</i>	<i>try</i>		
<i>get a/the message across</i>	<i>infographics</i>	<i>less chance</i>		
<i>in terms of...</i>	<i>having to...</i>	<i>rather than...</i>		
<i>in words...</i>	<i>much more</i>			

3.) How will communication change in the future?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences.*

**EXAMPLE:**

(OPINION) *"Well, I suppose there are a number of ways which we can already envisage on the horizon. Google is launching its Glass which will change how people communicate.*

(OPINION / REASON) *Personally, I think that we'll adopt using voice messages more in the future as opposed to sending text messages simply because it's quicker to record a quick message than to text someone. But if some smart person came up with a way of sending picture messages, sort of like a super advanced emoticon message, I guess that would probably be instantly popular with a lot of young people. And of course, there may be even more advanced technology introduced which we aren't aware of at the moment, or which is still in the very early stages of development.*

(EXAMPLE) *It's a bit like trying to imagine a smartphone before cellular phones were even invented. It is almost impossible to imagine the concept, but anything could be possible in the future."*

**WORDS and PHRASES**

<i>envisage</i>	<i>quicker/faster</i>	<i>emoticon</i>	<i>record</i>	<i>suppose</i>
<i>develop</i>	<i>smartphone</i>	<i>anything</i>	<i>introduce</i>	<i>concept</i>
<i>adopt</i>	<i>invented</i>	<i>personally</i>	<i>change</i>	<i>imagine</i>
<i>almost impossible</i>	<i>in the future</i>	<i>advanced technology</i>		<i>early stages</i>
<i>instantly popular</i>	<i>aware of...</i>	<i>come up with...</i>		<i>even more</i>
<i>of course</i>	<i>picture message</i>	<i>sort of like...</i>		<i>a bit like...</i>
<i>quick message</i>	<i>voice message</i>	<i>super advanced</i>		<i>simply because...</i>
<i>as opposed to...</i>	<i>on the horizon</i>	<i>text message</i>		<i>a number of ways</i>

## Topic: FAMILY

## 1.) How much time do you spend together with other members of your family?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

**EXAMPLE:**

(EXPERIENCE) *"Almost every day, I typically eat breakfast with my mother and sometimes my father joins us if he hasn't already left for work.*

(EXAMPLE) *Then, in the evening, we usually eat dinner together and that would include my sister and brother, as well as my parents. This means that, normally, we are together at least once every day. "*

**WORDS and PHRASES**

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*once**typically**usually**include**then**sometimes**normally**as well as**already**at least**almost every day*

2.) When do you get together with other members of your family?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences.*

**EXAMPLE:**

(EXPERIENCE) *"More often than not it's at meal times, usually at dinner.*

(EXAMPLE) *During weekends, we may spend more time together as we usually have lunch and dinner together if we aren't going out somewhere. Sometimes, if we have extra time or money, we eat out, relax at the beach, or check out the latest movies. Oh, and of course, during the holidays. It's the time we also get together with my extended family. We all meet up at my grandmother's beach house and stay for the weekend."*

**WORDS and PHRASES**

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*during                      holidays                      relax                      extra                      time                      money                      weekend*

*out somewhere                      meal time                      more often than not                      spend more time*

*latest movie                      check out                      extended family                      meet up*

*eat out*

3.) Do people do things together as a family when there are festivals in your country?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

**EXAMPLE:**

**(OPINION)** "Yes. Normally, if it's a religious festival or a special day, the parents won't be working, so they spend time with their children.

**(EXAMPLE)** They might go to church or to an event related to the festival, or they may plan to take the children out someplace special for a family activity in order to take advantage of the extra time together. Even when the children have grown up, they'll usually visit and spend time with their parents to celebrate the holiday."

**WORDS and PHRASES**

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- normally*                      *church*                      *event*                      *someplace*                      *festival*
- celebrate the day*                      *religious festival*                      *special day*                      *important holiday*
- some kind of ...*                      *take advantage*                      *plan to...*                      *grow up*
- usually visit...*                      *spend time with...*                      *related to...*                      *young one*
- spend ... time*