



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

---

- 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

---

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 ONLY 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>

**Pronunciation**

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)*

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

## REMINDERS

---

- 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

---

### Topic: GIFT

1.) How important do you think giving gifts is within families?

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

2.) Let's move on from personal gifts to international gifts and let's talk about international aid.  
What type of aid do countries give to other countries?

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

3.) What do you think motivates governments to give aid to other countries?

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

## Topic: ADULT EDUCATION

- 1.) Do many adults who have been working for some time return to a college of some sort for further study?

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

- 2.) Who pays for this education?

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

- 3.) In the future, do you think more adults will enroll in courses?

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

## Answers

---

### Topic: GIFT

#### 1.) How important do you think giving gifts is within families?

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

**EXAMPLE:**

(OPINION / REASON) *"Well, I don't think it is that important but it is a wonderful way of showing how much you care about someone. It gives them the feeling that you think of them and that you are concerned with their well-being.*

(EFFECT / REASON) *Besides, it makes people happy to receive gifts and people like giving gifts as well. It's all about thought and sharing those special moments with your family; that's what makes it so special."*

#### WORDS and PHRASES

---

*concern*

*thought*

*besides*

*care*

*all about...*

*think of ...*

*makes ... happy*

*wonderful way*

*showing how much ... sharing*

*special moments with*

*special feeling*

2.) Let's move on from personal gifts to international gifts and let's talk about international aid. What type of aid do countries give to other countries?

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

**EXAMPLE:**

(OPINION / REASON) *"I suppose there are many different kinds of aid which a country could offer to another country, but the most common aid, or at least the aid we usually see on news reports on TV, is humanitarian aid in case of natural disasters.*

(EXAMPLE) *For example, when there's an emergency, flooding, famine or some other type of natural disaster, other countries send people to help, they send food, machinery, medical supplies, equipment and any other special help that is urgently needed.*

(EXAMPLE) *Then there is the aid that countries provide on a more permanent basis; social programs, education schemes and even financial aid, which is provided as part of political agreements and is continuous, not just during emergencies."*

**WORDS and PHRASES**

---

<i>send</i>	<i>machinery</i>	<i>provide</i>	<i>scheme</i>
<i>equipment</i>	<i>education</i>	<i>continuous</i>	<i>during</i>
<i>at least</i>	<i>some other type of...</i>	<i>news report</i>	<i>natural disaster</i>
<i>any other</i>	<i>special help</i>	<i>social program</i>	<i>permanent basis</i>
<i>many different kinds of...</i>	<i>urgently needed as part of...</i>	<i>financial aid</i>	<i>agreement</i>
<i>most common</i>	<i>not just people</i>	<i>offer</i>	<i>emergency</i>

3.) What do you think motivates governments to give aid to other countries?

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

**EXAMPLE:**

**(OPINION / REASON)** *"I think that would depend on the type of aid and the circumstances. In the case of natural disasters or even man-made disasters, it's basically a time when we all help each other in whichever way we can."*

**(REASON / EXAMPLE)** *I think governments help another country in difficulty because they think that maybe one day they might need help in a similar situation. It's all about being human and living and sharing life on the same planet. Those who can help should help those who need help, whether it's on a national level or on a personal level. It's one of the foundations we build our societies on."*

**WORDS and PHRASES**

---

<i>living</i>	<i>basically</i>	<i>time</i>	<i>disaster</i>	<i>whether</i>
<i>another</i>	<i>whichever</i>	<i>build</i>	<i>foundation</i>	<i>society</i>
<i>in the case of...</i>	<i>in difficulty</i>	<i>natural disaster</i>	<i>man-made</i>	<i>type of...</i>
<i>depend on...</i>	<i>might need...</i>	<i>sharing life</i>	<i>similar situation</i>	<i>all about...</i>
<i>national/personal level</i>	<i>maybe one day... being human</i>	<i>one of...</i>	<i>circumstance</i>	

Topic: ADULT EDUCATION

1.) Do many adults who have been working for some time return to a college of some sort for further study?

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

**EXAMPLE:**

**(OPINION / REASON)** *"Yes, I think that nowadays many of them do, especially if they want to be competitive in their field.*

**(EXAMPLE)** *Most of my friends have completed post-graduate diplomas or advanced skills courses related to their work."*

WORDS and PHRASES

---

*course*

*work*

*nowadays*

*competitive*

*have completed*

*in ... field*

*advanced skill*

*most of...*

*many of...*

*especially if...*

*post-graduate*

*related to...*

2.) Who pays for this education?

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

**EXAMPLE:**

(*OPINION* / *COMPARISON*) *"If it's a professional diploma or post-graduate course, then normally it's the student who pays. There are also some courses which are available in community colleges which are free, because they are funded by the government.*

**WORDS and PHRASES**

---

<i>which</i>	<i>student</i>	<i>free</i>	
<i>some courses</i>	<i>available in...</i>	<i>funded by...</i>	<i>professional diploma</i>
<i>then normally...</i>	<i>community colleges</i>	<i>post-graduate course</i>	<i>but there are also...</i>

3.) In the future, do you think more adults will enroll in courses?

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

**EXAMPLE:**

(OPINION / EFFECT) *"Yes, continuing education is now more important than ever. People need to keep their skills up to date, or even learn completely new ones to remain employable."*

(COMPARISON / REASON) *Most young people nowadays won't have just one job for life as their parents did. They are likely to undergo various skills training courses and academic training to keep up with the employers' demand for a highly skilled workforce."*

**WORDS and PHRASES**

---

<i>remain</i>	<i>employable</i>	<i>nowadays</i>	<i>training</i>
<i>skill</i>	<i>demand</i>	<i>workforce</i>	<i>course</i>
<i>continuing education more important</i>	<i>than ever</i>	<i>need to keep</i>	
<i>up to date</i>	<i>learn completely new ones</i>	<i>most ... people</i>	
<i>as maybe...</i>	<i>likely to...</i>	<i>academic training</i>	<i>keep up with...</i>
<i>from employers</i>	<i>highly skilled</i>	<i>undergo</i>	<i>various</i>