



English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Speaking

Assessing Speaking Performance

Assessment Criteria & Mark Schemes

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1 About LANGUAGECERT®

LANGUAGECERT® is a business name of PeopleCert Qualifications Ltd, UK company number 0962026, subsidiary of PeopleCert Group (PeopleCert).

LANGUAGECERT® is an awarding organisation regulated by Ofqual and offers language qualifications that are globally recognised and aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) at levels A1 to C2. LANGUAGECERT® delivers language qualifications through a network of approved test centres worldwide.

LANGUAGECERT® combines language qualification heritage with unparalleled exam administration systems and processes, and excellent customer service. For the dissemination and delivery of high-quality language qualifications, LANGUAGECERT® relies on the capabilities and systems developed and deployed by its sister companies within PeopleCert.

About PeopleCert

Established in 2000, PeopleCert is one of the leading players in the global certification industry, partnering with educational institutions, multinational organisations and governmental bodies for the development and management of globally recognised qualifications and the delivery of their related exams.

Equal opportunities

PeopleCert fully supports the principle of equal opportunities and is committed to satisfying this principle in all its activities and published material.

The aim of LANGUAGECERT® is to produce assessments that are based solely on the requirements of the qualification, and that do not discriminate against any group of learners. No group of learners should be put at a disadvantage by encountering questions or tests which are biased or might cause offence. Assessment material should not discriminate against any group on the grounds of culture, gender, age, disability, ethnic background, nationality, religion and belief, marital status, gender identification, social class or employment status.

Please refer to LANGUAGECERT®'s Equality and Diversity Policy on LANGUAGECERT®'s official website, www.languagecert.org.

2 LANGUAGECERT® ESOL qualifications

The LANGUAGECERT® ESOL qualifications offer a comprehensive assessment of Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking skills in English. These qualifications are designed for non-native speakers who wish to obtain a globally recognised certification of their English proficiency. The qualifications are mapped to the levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). LANGUAGECERT® ESOL qualifications are regulated by the English and Welsh qualification regulators, Ofqual and Qualifications Wales.

All examination levels (A1-C2) are intended for adult candidates (aged 16+) and can be used to demonstrate language proficiency for general, academic, or professional purposes. LANGUAGECERT® ESOL examinations at levels A1-B2 are also available as 'for Schools' exams, specifically tailored for younger candidates (aged 12-16) who wish to demonstrate their language competence at the corresponding CEFR levels. These 'for Schools' exams follow the same specifications and CEFR alignment principles but include content more appropriate for school-age learners.

The LANGUAGECERT® ESOL Speaking qualifications are separately administered spoken examinations available at the same levels as the ESOL Listening, Reading and Writing suite of qualifications. They can be taken either as a paper-based exam at a test centre, or as a computer-based exam.

3 Exam structure and format

The structure remains consistent across all levels of the exam to ensure familiarity with the format, reducing the need for extensive teaching time dedicated to test preparation.

Table 1 | Exam structure

Level	Duration	Structure
Preliminary (A1)	6 minutes	Part 1 Personal information Part 2 Situational role plays Part 3 Exchanging information Part 4 Long turn
Access (A2)	9 minutes	
Achiever (B1)	12 minutes	
Communicator (B2)	13 minutes	
Expert (C1)	15 minutes	
Mastery (C2)	17 minutes	

Table 2 | Exam format

Skill & Focus		Task
Part 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to communicate personal information to communicate opinions and ideas on a variety of topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spell name Give country of origin Answer up to five questions
Part 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to communicate appropriately in real-life situations using a range of functional language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two or three situations are presented by the interlocutor and candidates are required to respond to and initiate interactions.
Part 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to exchange information to complete a simple task (Preliminary / Access) to co-operate to reach agreement/decision (Achiever / Communicator) to engage in discussion and to justify, challenge and persuade when expressing and eliciting opinion (Expert / Mastery) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exchange information to identify similarities and differences in pictures of familiar situations at Preliminary and Access levels. Hold a short discussion to plan, arrange or decide on a topic using visual prompts at Achiever, and written text as the prompt at the three higher levels
Part 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to present a topic to demonstrate the ability to use sentences and produce a piece of connected spoken English to narrate, communicate ideas and express opinions to speak in depth on one topic from a wide range of abstract and complex subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After 30 seconds of preparation time, talk about a topic provided by the interlocutor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preliminary – for half a minute Access – for 1 minute Achiever – for 1 and a half minutes Communicator – for 2 minutes Expert – for 2 minutes Mastery – for 3 minutes Answer follow-up questions

More information on LANGUAGECERT® qualifications, support materials and webinars, together with our full series of official practice papers can be found on our website www.languagecert.org.

4 Assessing Speaking Performance

The purpose of the LANGUAGECERT® ESOL examinations is to assess a candidate's ability to communicate in English across CEFR levels. The speaking exam is designed to encourage candidates to produce language that is diverse in function and appropriate in content. These exams are conducted in a friendly, non-threatening environment, with an emphasis on fairness and transparency, to positively impact the candidate's learning experience. The aim is for LANGUAGECERT® exams to promote positive washback and be an integral part of the language learning process, even as standardised assessments.

The ESOL Speaking exams are conducted by trained, LANGUAGECERT®-approved interlocutors. All interlocutors undergo a rigorous training and certification process to ensure consistency in the administration of speaking exams worldwide. Additionally, their performance during live exam sessions is regularly monitored.

The speaking exam is assessed by either Marking Examiners or Marking Interlocutors, who undergo separate training and regular standardisation to maintain consistent and objective assessment.

Candidates are evaluated using four assessment criteria: Task Fulfilment and Coherence, Accuracy and Range of Grammar, Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary, and Pronunciation, Intonation and Fluency. Each level has a specific mark scheme with detailed descriptors. Brief definitions of the assessment criteria are provided in the table below.

Table 3 | Assessment criteria

Criteria	Description
Task Fulfilment and Coherence	The ability to engage in effective communicative exchanges and connect utterances
Accuracy and Range of Grammar	The ability to vary and demonstrate control of grammatical structures as appropriate to the task
Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary	The ability to vary and demonstrate control of lexis and register as appropriate to the task
Pronunciation, Intonation and Fluency	The ability to produce the sounds of English in order to be understood with appropriate stress and intonation and maintain the flow of speech

5 The Mark Scheme

At each level, an analytical mark scheme is used to evaluate whether candidates are below, at, or above the standard required in their speaking performance. The mark scheme for each level is divided into four bands, ranging from 0 to 3, with 0 being the lowest and 3 the highest. Descriptors for each criterion are provided for each band, specifying what a candidate is expected to demonstrate.

Band two descriptors outline the expected performance at a given level, indicating the standard required to demonstrate competence at that CEFR level. The bands above and below reflect how well or poorly the candidate performs the tasks.

The ESOL Speaking Qualification Handbook, available on the LANGUAGECERT® website (www.languagecert.org), includes a syllabus detailing the standards a learner must meet to achieve a pass and describes the grammar areas expected at each of the exam. This resource can assist teachers in understanding the required performance and distinguishing, for example, the range of prepositional phrases expected at different levels of proficiency.

Guidance for teachers

Even with access to detailed resources (such as mark schemes, the grammar syllabus, and CEFR descriptors), assessing students' performance may still be challenging, particularly if the teacher is also acting as an interlocutor during the exam. The mark schemes are designed to help identify students' strengths and weaknesses, offer constructive feedback, and gauge exam readiness. However, it is important to note that complete alignment between a mock exam and a live exam performance may not always be realistic.

5.1 Assessment criteria for LANGUAGECERT® ESOL Speaking Preliminary A1

Criteria		Description
Task Fulfilment and Coherence	Task fulfilment	The candidate is able to fulfil the aim of the tasks and can take part in simple routine exchanges by responding and taking turns. The candidate relies on the support of the interlocutor to initiate, maintain or repair the interaction, but can interact in a simple way. There may be some limited expansion in response to predictable questions. The intended message is usually communicated.
	Coherence	The candidate is generally able to link words and groups of words in a simple way using simple connectors, such as 'and' 'then' etc.
Accuracy and Range of Grammar		The candidate can use a limited range of structures and sentence patterns at A1 level to communicate intended meaning. Noticeable errors occur and may occasionally impede communication.
Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary		The candidate can use a limited range of A1 level vocabulary to communicate basic information about personal details and some concrete situations. Noticeable errors occur and may occasionally impede communication.
Pronunciation, Intonation and Fluency	Pronunciation and Intonation	The candidate can speak clearly enough to be understood by a sympathetic listener, despite marked first language features. Noticeable errors occur, but the message is usually communicated.
	Fluency	The candidate is able to speak for short periods, although with noticeable hesitations between utterances. There may be pauses to search for language and attempts to repair communication, but the message is usually communicated.

5.2 A1 Mark Scheme

	Task Fulfilment and Coherence	Accuracy and Range of Grammar	Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary	Pronunciation, Intonation and Fluency
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks are fulfilled effectively • Interaction generally relies on the support of the interlocutor • Intended message is usually communicated despite occasional misunderstandings • Use of very simple connectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of A1 level grammar is used • A reasonable level of accuracy • Errors may occur, but do not impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of A1 level vocabulary is used • Errors may occur, but do not impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation is sufficiently clear despite first language influences • Noticeable pronunciation errors • The flow of language is maintained, generally with interlocutor support • Some hesitations and reformulations may be noticeable
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks are mostly fulfilled • Interaction relies on the support of the interlocutor • The intended message is usually communicated despite noticeable misunderstandings • Some use of simple connectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited range of A1 level grammar is used • Some evidence of grammatical control • Errors occur and the message may occasionally be obscured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited range of A1 vocabulary is used • Errors occur, and the message may occasionally be obscured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation can be understood with some effort • First language influences may obscure the message • The flow of language is maintained in very short utterances • Frequent hesitations and reformulations
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks remain largely unfulfilled • Interaction breaks down despite the support of the interlocutor • Frequent failure to respond • Contributions lack relevance • Intended message is not successfully communicated • Ideas mostly expressed through unconnected words and phrases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient range and control of A1 level language • Frequent errors obscure the intended message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of vocabulary is too limited to deal with the A1 level tasks • Vocabulary errors often obscure the intended message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear pronunciation prevents clear understanding • Long hesitations and reformulations impede communication
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks are largely unattempted and intended message is not communicated • No connected language • OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks the language to attempt the tasks • The intended message is generally obscured • OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks the vocabulary to attempt the tasks • The intended message is generally obscured • OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear pronunciation prevents any understanding • Frequent hesitation prevents any communication • OR insufficient sample of language to assess

5.3 Assessment criteria for LANGUAGECERT® ESOL Speaking Access A2

Criteria		Description
Task Fulfilment and Coherence	Task fulfilment	The candidate is able to fulfil the aims of the tasks and can manage simple routine exchanges by responding and taking turns. The candidate generally requires the support of the interlocutor to initiate, maintain or repair the interaction, but can contribute relevant points. Although misunderstandings may occasionally occur, the intended message is usually communicated.
	Coherence	The candidate is generally able to link phrases through the use of simple connectors, linking ideas with 'and', 'but', 'because' etc.
Accuracy and Range of Grammar		The candidate uses a range of A2 level grammar to communicate in a limited way, often relying on memorised phrases and formulae. Noticeable errors occur, but the intended message is usually communicated.
Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary		The candidate uses a range of vocabulary at A2 level to communicate basic information on familiar topics in simple everyday situations. Noticeable errors occur, but the intended message is usually communicated.
Pronunciation, Intonation and Fluency	Pronunciation and Intonation	The candidate can speak clearly enough to be generally understood, despite noticeable first language features. Although intonation errors and mispronunciations are noticeable, the intended message is generally communicated to a sympathetic listener.
	Fluency	The candidate is generally able to manage the conventions of turn taking in short exchanges but does not generally initiate or sustain the interaction. There may be noticeable hesitation and reformulation, especially when less-familiar topics are discussed, but the intended message is usually communicated.

5.4 A2 Mark Scheme

	Task Fulfilment and Coherence	Accuracy and Range of Grammar	Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary	Pronunciation, Intonation and Fluency
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks are fulfilled with relative ease • Interaction is maintained with support from the interlocutor • Contributions are mostly relevant • Intended message is mostly communicated • Ideas are clearly linked and sequenced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of A2 level grammar is used • Grammar is sufficiently accurate • Errors may occur, but do not impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sufficient range of A2 level vocabulary is used to deal with the tasks • Errors may occur, but do not impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation is sufficiently clear despite first language influences • Noticeable pronunciation errors do not impede communication • The flow of language is generally maintained, occasionally without interlocutor support • Occasional hesitations and reformulations may be noticeable
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks are mostly fulfilled • Interaction relies on the support of the interlocutor • Contributions are broadly relevant • The intended message is generally communicated despite occasional misunderstandings • Ideas are simply linked and sequenced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited range of A2 level grammar is used • Grammar is generally accurate • Errors occur and may occasionally obscure the message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of A2 vocabulary is used to deal with the tasks • Errors occur, and may occasionally obscure the message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation is sufficiently clear for general understanding • First language influences may occasionally obscure the message • The flow of language in short exchanges is generally maintained with the support of the interlocutor • Frequent hesitations and reformulations do not impede communication
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks remain largely unfulfilled • Interaction breaks down despite the support of the interlocutor • General failure to respond or initiate • Contributions lack relevance • Intended message is not successfully communicated • Ideas mostly expressed through unconnected words and phrases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of grammar is too limited to deal with the A2 level tasks • Frequent errors often make the message difficult to follow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of vocabulary is too limited to deal with the A2 level tasks • Vocabulary errors often obscure the intended message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear pronunciation leads to frequent difficulty in understanding • Long hesitations and reformulations lead to frequent breakdowns in communication
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks are unfulfilled and intended message is not communicated • No connected language • OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of control in basic structures • The intended message is generally obscured • OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks the vocabulary to attempt the tasks • The message is generally obscured • OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear pronunciation prevents understanding • Frequent hesitation prevents communication • OR insufficient sample of language to assess

5.5 Assessment criteria for LANGUAGECERT® ESOL Speaking Achiever B1

Criteria		Description
Task Fulfilment and Coherence	Task fulfilment	The candidate is able to fulfil the tasks with a degree of independence and generally doesn't need additional support from the interlocutor. On the whole, the interaction with the interlocutor is maintained through the use of natural turn-taking, and with only occasional need for clarification and/or repetition. The candidate's contributions are generally relevant to the topic and to the interaction with the interlocutor, although occasional misunderstandings may occur. The candidate's intended message is successfully communicated most of the time.
	Coherence	The candidate is generally able to link ideas successfully in simple ways and makes points that can be followed by a sympathetic listener.
Accuracy and Range of Grammar		The candidate uses a relatively limited range of B1 level grammar with a reasonable level of control. Noticeable errors still occur, especially when more complex ideas are being expressed, but these errors do not generally impede communication.
Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary		The candidate uses a range of vocabulary at B1 level to deal with the tasks with a good level of control. Noticeable errors still occur, especially when unfamiliar topics and situations are being discussed, but these do not generally impede communication.
Pronunciation, Intonation and Fluency	Pronunciation and Intonation	The candidate is generally intelligible. Although first language influences and occasional mispronunciations may be clearly noticeable, these do not usually impede communication. The candidate is generally able to use intonation to support meaning, despite noticeable first language interference.
	Fluency	The candidate is generally able to maintain the flow of language without undue hesitation. The candidate may need to pause for grammatical and lexical planning or repair, especially in longer stretches of free production, but the flow of language remains comprehensible.

5.6 B1 Mark Scheme

	Task Fulfilment and Coherence	Accuracy and Range of Grammar	Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary	Pronunciation, Intonation and Fluency
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks are fulfilled with little or no support from the interlocutor • Interaction is maintained • Turn taking is natural • Contributions are relevant • Intended message is successfully communicated • Ideas are successfully linked and sequenced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reasonable range of B1 level grammar is used • Grammar is sufficiently accurate • Errors may occur, but do not impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sufficient range of B1 level vocabulary is used to deal with the tasks • Errors may occur, but do not impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation is clearly intelligible despite first language influences • Occasional pronunciation errors do not impede communication • Intonation is used to help convey meaning • The flow of language is generally maintained without interlocutor support • Occasional hesitations may be evident
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks are mostly fulfilled with a degree of independence • Interaction is maintained most of the time • Turn taking is mostly natural • Contributions are mostly relevant • Intended message is mostly successfully communicated • Ideas are mostly well linked and sequenced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A relatively limited range of B1 level grammar is used • Grammar is reasonably accurate • Major errors may occur, but the message is always communicated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of B1 level vocabulary is used to deal with the tasks • Major errors may occur, but do not generally impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation is sufficiently intelligible for general understanding • First language influences on stress and intonation are noticeable, but meaning remains clear • Pronunciation and intonation errors only occasionally impede communication • The flow of language is generally maintained despite some hesitation • Hesitation may be more evident in longer stretches of free production
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks remain largely unfulfilled • Interaction is only maintained with the constant support of the interlocutor • Very little natural turn taking takes place • Contributions lack relevance • Intended message is not successfully communicated • Ideas are not linked and the sequence of ideas is difficult to follow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of grammar is too limited to deal with the B1 level tasks • Frequent errors sometimes make the message difficult to follow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of vocabulary is too limited to deal with the B1 level tasks • Vocabulary errors make the message difficult to follow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear pronunciation leads to difficulty in understanding • Inappropriate intonation and stress patterns impede communication • Long hesitations are evident even in the production of B1 level language
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tasks are unfulfilled and intended message is not communicated • Utterances mainly consist of disconnected words and phrases • OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of control even when using basic structures • The intended message is lost • OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks the vocabulary to deal with the tasks • The message is mostly lost • OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear pronunciation and/or intonation prevents clear understanding • A great deal of hesitation places strain on the listener • OR insufficient sample of language to assess

5.7 Assessment criteria for LANGUAGECERT® ESOL Speaking Communicator B2

Criteria		Description
Task Fulfilment and Coherence	Task fulfilment	The candidate is able to fulfil the tasks with relative ease and confidence, managing the conventions of turn taking and using appropriate phrases. The candidate clearly expresses his/her intended message and is able to provide relevant supporting detail where appropriate. Content is generally relevant to both the topic and to the interaction and misunderstandings are rare. The candidate's intended message is successfully communicated.
	Coherence	A range of B2 level cohesive devices is used to create clear, coherent discourse, although this may not always be sustained in longer contributions.
Accuracy and Range of Grammar		The candidate uses a range of B2 level structures with a relatively good level of control. Errors may occur, but these errors do not impede communication.
Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary		The candidate uses a range of vocabulary at B2 level to deal with the tasks with a good level of control. The use of vocabulary is appropriate to the context or situation. Some errors may occur, especially when less familiar topics and situations are being discussed, but these do not impede communication.
Pronunciation, Intonation and Fluency	Pronunciation and Intonation	The candidate's pronunciation is reasonably clear and can be understood without difficulty. Although first language influences and occasional mispronunciations may be noticeable, these do not impede communication. The candidate is able to use appropriate intonation patterns to support meaning.
	Fluency	The candidate is generally able to maintain the flow of language without noticeable hesitation. The candidate may need to pause when searching for patterns and expressions, but there is no undue strain on the listener.

5.8 B2 Mark Scheme

	Task Fulfilment and Coherence	Accuracy and Range of Grammar	Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary	Pronunciation, Intonation and Fluency
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks are fulfilled with ease and confidence • Turn taking is spontaneous and natural • Contributions are fully relevant and detailed • Significant points are appropriately highlighted with supporting detail • Discourse is clear and coherent and produced in an appropriate style with a wide range of • B2 level cohesive devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of B2 level grammar is used • There is a consistently high level of accuracy and control • Occasional errors may occur, but are often corrected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of B2 level vocabulary is used to deal with the tasks • Choice of vocabulary is generally appropriate and effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation is clear and natural • Intonation is used to convey meaning effectively • The flow of language is maintained effectively • No evident hesitations
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks are fulfilled with relative ease • Turn taking is naturally handled • Contributions are mostly relevant • Intended message is clearly communicated. • Misunderstandings are rare • Discourse is mostly clear and coherent with use of B2 level cohesive devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good range of B2 level grammar is used • There is a good level of accuracy and control • Some errors may occur, but the message is always communicated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sufficient range of vocabulary is used to deal with the B2 tasks • Choice of vocabulary is generally appropriate and effective • Some vocabulary errors occur, but do not impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation is reasonably clear and easily understood • Stress and intonation patterns are appropriately used to help convey meaning • The flow of language is generally maintained despite some hesitation • No undue strain on the listener
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks remain largely unfulfilled • Interaction is only maintained with the support of the interlocutor • Little natural turn taking takes place • Contributions lack relevance • Intended message is only communicated with difficulty • Ideas are linked together simply and may be difficult to follow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of grammar is too limited to deal with the B2 level tasks • Frequent errors are noticeable, and may impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of vocabulary is too limited to deal with the B2 level tasks • Vocabulary errors may make the message difficult to follow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear pronunciation leads to undue strain on the listener • Inappropriate stress and intonation patterns impede communication • Frequent hesitations are evident, with repetition and attempts to repair language
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tasks are unfulfilled and intended message is not successfully communicated • Ideas are difficult to follow and not linked together into connected speech • OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate range of grammar • Frequent errors impede communication • OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks the vocabulary to deal with the B2 level tasks • The message is obscured by vocabulary errors • OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear pronunciation and/or intonation prevents clear understanding • Frequent hesitation places strain on the listener • OR insufficient sample of language to assess

5.9 Assessment criteria for LANGUAGECERT® ESOL Speaking Expert C1

Criteria		Description
Task Fulfilment and Coherence	Task fulfilment	The candidate is able to fulfil the tasks by interacting flexibly and effectively. The candidate can manage the conventions of turn taking and can clearly relate contributions to those of the interlocutor. In fulfilling the tasks, the candidate provides evidence of flexibility. For example, detailed complex descriptions are produced, subtopics are clearly connected and each point in an argument is fully supported before an appropriate conclusion is reached. Content is consistently relevant to both the topic and to the interaction and misunderstandings do not occur.
	Coherence	The candidate can use a range of connectors and cohesive devices to produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured discourse, with a good degree of control.
Accuracy and Range of Grammar		The candidate uses a wide range of C1 level structures with a high level of accuracy. A few errors may occur when complex structures are attempted, but these are generally corrected.
Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary		The candidate uses a broad range of vocabulary at C1 level to deal with the tasks effectively with a good level of control. The use of vocabulary is appropriate to the context or situation, and candidates can compensate for occasional gaps in vocabulary knowledge through circumlocution. Although a few slips may occur, there are no major vocabulary errors.
Pronunciation, Intonation and Fluency	Pronunciation and Intonation	The candidate's pronunciation is consistently clear and can be readily understood. Stress and intonation patterns are sufficiently controlled for meaning to be supported and subtleties of meaning to be conveyed.
	Fluency	The candidate is able to use language in a fluent and spontaneous manner with no noticeable pauses or hesitations. Only conceptually difficult subjects hinder a completely smooth flow of language.

5.10 C1 Mark Scheme

	Task Fulfilment and Coherence	Accuracy and Range of Grammar	Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary	Pronunciation, Intonation and Fluency
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks are fulfilled with flexibility and confidence • Turn taking is spontaneous, flexible and wholly natural • Contributions are always fully relevant and sufficiently detailed • Points are supported with precise and complex supporting detail • Discourse is consistently clear, smooth-flowing and well structured • Linking and cohesive devices are used very effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of C1 level grammar is used effectively • There is a consistently high level of accuracy and control • Errors are very rare and unobtrusive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A consistently broad range of C1 level vocabulary is used • Choice of vocabulary is consistently appropriate and effective • Errors are rare and unobtrusive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation is consistently clear and natural • Stress and intonation patterns are used effectively to convey subtleties of meaning • A spontaneous flow of natural language is maintained without effort • No evident hesitations
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks are fulfilled with ease and confidence • Turn taking is naturally handled • Contributions are always relevant and detailed • Intended message is clearly communicated across the range of tasks • Discourse is clear, smooth flowing and well-structured • Linking and cohesive devices are used effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of C1 level grammar is used • There is a high level of accuracy and control • A few errors may occur in more complex structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A broad range of C1 vocabulary is used to deal with the tasks • Choice of vocabulary is generally appropriate and effective • Some minor vocabulary errors occur, but do not impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation is clear and easily understood • Stress and intonation patterns are appropriate and used to support meaning • The flow of language is generally maintained despite some hesitation • No undue strain on the listener
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks remain largely unfulfilled • Communication is unclear in places and puts strain on the listener • There is undue reliance on support from the interlocutor • Little natural turn taking takes place • Contributions lack relevance • Intended message is not always successfully communicated • Limited use of cohesive devices results in poorly flowing discourse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of grammar is too limited to deal with the C1 level tasks • Frequent errors are noticeable, and are not corrected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of vocabulary is too limited to deal with the C1 level tasks • Vocabulary errors are noticeable, and not corrected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear pronunciation may lead to undue strain on the listener • Inappropriate stress and intonation patterns may impede communication • Hesitation is noticeable in places
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tasks are unfulfilled, and the intended message is not successfully communicated • Ideas are difficult to follow and not linked together into connected speech • OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate range of grammar to deal with C1 level tasks • Frequent errors put a strain on the listener • OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks the vocabulary to deal with the C1 level tasks • The message is obscured by vocabulary errors • OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear pronunciation and/or intonation prevents clear understanding • Frequent hesitation places strain on the listener • OR insufficient sample of language to assess

5.11 Assessment criteria for LANGUAGECERT® ESOL Speaking Mastery C2

Criteria		Description
Task Fulfilment and Coherence	Task fulfilment	The candidate is able to fulfil the tasks by interacting in a fully flexible and effective way. The candidate can manage the conventions of turn taking with complete ease and can relate contributions effortlessly to those of the interlocutor. In fulfilling the tasks, the candidate provides evidence of a high degree of flexibility. For example, incorporating comprehensive supporting detail with precision and relevance whilst delivering a clear and unambiguous message, however complex the arguments. Content is consistently relevant to both the topic and to the interaction and misunderstandings do not occur.
	Coherence	The candidate can use a wide range of connectors and cohesive devices effectively to produce clear, smoothly flowing and well-structured discourse. This has a logical structure, drawing the listener's attention to relevant points in a way that helps sustain and develop the interaction effectively.
Accuracy and Range of Grammar		The candidate uses a wide range of C2 level structures with a high level of accuracy and flexibility to communicate subtleties of meaning with precision. There are very few noticeable errors, and these are generally corrected.
Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary		The candidate uses a broad range of vocabulary at C2 level to deal with the tasks effectively with full control. The use of vocabulary is consistently appropriate to the context or situation, and a wide range of expression is used to convey subtleties of meaning effectively. Although the occasional slip may occur, there are no major vocabulary errors.
Pronunciation, Intonation and Fluency	Pronunciation and Intonation	The candidate's pronunciation is consistently clear and can be readily understood. Stress and intonation patterns are sufficiently controlled to allow precise meaning to be supported effectively and subtleties of meaning to be conveyed.
	Fluency	The candidate is able to use language in a fluent and spontaneous manner with no noticeable pauses or hesitations, and can maintain this flow of language effectively throughout the interaction.

5.12 C2 Mark Scheme

	Task Fulfilment and Coherence	Accuracy and Range of Grammar	Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary	Pronunciation, Intonation and Fluency
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tasks are fulfilled with complete ease, flexibility and confidence Turn taking is consistently spontaneous, flexible and wholly natural Contributions are fully relevant, highly detailed and completely effective All points are supported with precise and complex supporting detail Discourse is consistently clear, smooth-flowing and well structured Linking and cohesive devices are used very effectively and appropriately throughout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide range of C2 level grammar is used completely effectively There is a consistently high level of accuracy and control Errors are extremely rare and unobtrusive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A consistently broad range of C2 level vocabulary is used Choice of vocabulary is consistently appropriate and highly effective There are no noticeable errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pronunciation is extremely clear and natural throughout Intonation and stress patterns are used very effectively to convey subtleties of meaning A spontaneous flow of natural language is maintained with complete ease No evident hesitations
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tasks are fulfilled with noticeable ease and confidence Turn taking is naturally handled with a high degree of flexibility Contributions are always fully relevant and sufficiently detailed Points are supported with sufficient detail across the range of tasks Discourse is clear, smooth flowing and well-structured Linking and cohesive devices are used effectively and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide range of C2 level grammar is used There is a high level of accuracy and control A few minor errors may occur in more complex structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A broad range of C2 vocabulary is used to deal with the tasks Choice of vocabulary is consistently appropriate and effective A few minor vocabulary errors may occur, but do not impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pronunciation is consistently clear and natural Stress and intonation patterns are appropriate and used to convey meaning effectively A spontaneous flow of natural language is generally maintained No undue strain on the listener
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tasks remain partly unfulfilled Communication is less clear in places and may place strain on the listener There is some reliance on support from the interlocutor Natural turn taking does not always take place Contributions may lack relevance at times Intended message may occasionally be obscured Limited use of cohesive devices restricts the flow of the discourse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Range of grammar is too limited to deal with the C2 level tasks effectively Errors are noticeable, may obscure meaning and/or are not corrected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Range of vocabulary is too limited to deal with the C2 level tasks effectively Vocabulary errors are noticeable, may obscure meaning and/or are not corrected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unclear pronunciation may place some strain on the listener Unnatural stress and intonation patterns may affect clear communication Hesitation is noticeable in places
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The tasks are largely unfulfilled, and the intended message is not successfully communicated Ideas may be difficult to follow or not sufficiently linked together into connected speech OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate range of grammar to deal with C2 level tasks Noticeable errors put a strain on the listener OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lacks the vocabulary to deal with the C2 level tasks The message may be obscured by vocabulary errors OR insufficient sample of language to assess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unclear pronunciation and/or intonation obscures intended meaning Hesitation places strain on the listener OR insufficient sample of language to assess

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