

GUIDELINES FOR EXAMINATIONS IN ORAL SKILLS: TEACHERS' CERTIFICATE

Guidelines for Teachers, Examiners and Teacher Candidates

1. There is general agreement in teacher education that the best preparation for teaching examinable oral skills would be for teachers to subject themselves to the examination process. The areas assessed in both the Level 4 and Level 5 examinations enable the candidate to demonstrate oral skills as the basis of teaching and learning.
2. The assessments offered have been devised after consultation with a number of colleges offering both pre-service and in-service training for teachers. It is anticipated that there will be candidates from all levels of education – primary, secondary, further and higher, and that these assessments will offer a challenge to **all** teachers, **whatever their specialisms**.
3. **TEACHERS-IN-TRAINING (LEVEL 4) CERTIFICATE**

Section 1: Exposition Skills

Candidates are expected to demonstrate their ability to expound and to explain part of a subject or an activity in such a way as to engage their audience. A choice can be made between formal and informal subject or activity. Other candidates should be used as an appropriate learning and listening group.

Section 2: Personal Interpretation

There is an opportunity here for the candidate “to perform”. In a) this will be achieved through an oral presentation of someone else’s words; in b) the emphasis is on one’s own personal thoughts and feelings. In each case, the performance should lead to brief discussion.

Section 3: Handling Group Response

The object here is to have succeeded in producing a response from the listening group or audience and then to demonstrate sensitivity and tact in handling that response.

Section 4: General Performance

Discussion stemming from the previous sections is an essential part of the assessment. It will involve both the examiner and other candidates where appropriate. Candidates are expected to show their ability to listen perceptively, as well as to talk confidently and with conviction. The overall assessment is designed to encourage their full range of professional skills.

4. TEACHERS-IN-SERVICE (LEVEL 5) CERTIFICATE

Section 1: Communication for Teaching and Learning

This section enables the candidate to display an understanding of the process of learning **and** teaching. Candidates are expected to describe their own experiences and how they have come to terms in meeting their teaching and learning objectives, whether successful or not. The presentation must include a sequence in which the candidate communicates with a listening group, and this can be with the listeners being a normal audience or acting as simulated learners. A teacher of a foreign language, for example, might concentrate on a first lesson with adult learners, to illustrate the inhibitions to be overcome. Whatever field of study the candidate chooses, teaching materials if used should be simple, and audio-visual aids should not dominate proceedings. The main objective is to share experience pleasurably through effective communication.

Section 2: Interpreting the Written Word

The onus is on candidates to select two extracts that complement each other in order to produce a positive response from the listening group. The group may comprise a small number of other candidates or the entire audience. The subject matter should be appropriate to a particular group, and the candidate should introduce the readings by explaining the exact educational context that would be created. Discussion in this section should concentrate objectively on the subject matter and its relevance, without requiring the audience to role-play.

Section 3: Private Viva

Candidates are expected to have selected four topics, themes, or areas of teaching and learning in which they are personally involved, in advance of the assessment. The examiner will then discuss **two** of these, giving the opportunity to candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and enthusiasm as well as their awareness of any problem areas. Candidates are invited to bring any relevant support material with them in order to illustrate their chosen topic or theme, and if necessary to give a short demonstration of any particular points of learning or teaching.

5. Details of candidates' performances will be recorded on individual assessment profiles to be completed after the examination. For this reason individual marks and grades are not to be awarded on any section of each assessment, but the overall comment both verbally and in writing should give candidates a positive idea of their level of achievement.
6. The Level 4 Certificate assessment will be held by arrangement in the candidate's educational establishment, with not more than ten to twelve candidates per day.
7. The Level 5 Certificate will be held at a venue and time to be mutually agreed by the teacher and the English Speaking Board.
8. Course tutors are invited to contact the Examinations Secretary at ESB Headquarters for any further information that is required.