

Exam format

Total exam time: 25 minutes

The exam consists of five assessed phases:

- ▶ Formal presentation of a topic prepared by the candidate (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ Candidate-led discussion of the topic presentation with the examiner (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ Interactive phase (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ Listening phase (up to 3 minutes)
- ▶ Conversation on two subject areas selected by the examiner (up to 6 minutes)

Candidate performance

In addition to the items listed for the previous grades, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following communicative skills and meet the language requirements listed below during the exam.

Communicative skills

In the Formal topic presentation phase

- ▶ Present a complex topic with a high degree of linguistic formality to the examiner, who will probably be unfamiliar with the subject matter
- ▶ Present a clear argument with an effective logical structure which helps the examiner to notice and remember significant points
- ▶ Bring the presentation to a logical conclusion by inviting questions and comments from the examiner

In the Topic discussion phase

- ▶ Initiate the discussion and actively seek ways in which to engage the examiner in a meaningful exchange of ideas and opinions
- ▶ Take full responsibility for the maintenance of the discussion
- ▶ Be able to deal effectively with the examiner's input by responding to a variety of conversational gambits and handling in-depth questioning

In the Interactive phase

- ▶ Control and sustain the discussion at all times
- ▶ Actively encourage the examiner's collaboration in the task
- ▶ Direct the interaction towards a successful conclusion

In the Listening phase

- ▶ Understand texts on abstract and complex topics which may be of a specialist nature beyond his or her own field
- ▶ Understand virtually everything heard when delivered at natural native speaker speed
- ▶ Identify implicit meaning

In the Conversation phase

- ▶ Take full responsibility for the maintenance of the conversation
- ▶ Hold a discussion unconstrained by linguistic limitations, without showing signs of having to restrict what he or she wants to say
- ▶ Introduce his or her contribution into the joint discourse with natural turn-taking and referencing
- ▶ Demonstrate the ability to make an unobtrusive substitution for a word or expression he or she is unable to recall

Language requirements

Language functions

- ▶ Asserting
- ▶ Denying
- ▶ Softening and downplaying propositions
- ▶ Contradicting
- ▶ Implying
- ▶ Affirming

Grammar

- ▶ A comprehensive and reliable mastery of a very wide range of language to formulate thoughts precisely, give emphasis and eliminate ambiguity
- ▶ Differing linguistic forms to reformulate ideas and convey finer shades of meaning
- ▶ Complete and consistent grammatical control of highly complex language at all times

Lexis

- ▶ A good command of a very broad lexical repertoire
- ▶ A wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms
- ▶ Phrases and expressions relating to the language functions listed above

Phonology

- ▶ Produce individual sounds so as to be fully understood by the examiner, with only a rare sound that deviates from an internationally intelligible model
- ▶ Stress and intonation patterns which are recognisably specific to English without any lapses in intelligibility

Subject areas for the Conversation phase

There are no specific subject areas for Grade 12.

Candidates should be able to make use of a wide range of vocabulary items relating to subject areas of all previous grades as well as other subjects of general or topical interest.

At this grade, candidates are expected to be able to enter into discussion on any subject that the examiner deems appropriate for the individual candidate. The age of the candidate will be taken into account when the examiner makes his or her choice.

Grade 12 communicative skills and language requirements have been mapped to CEFR level C2.