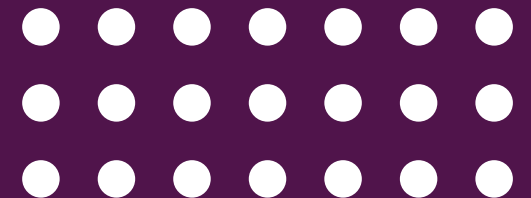


Incorporating learner feedback in the design of ESOL Skills for Life reading assessments

Catherine Hughes

7 April 2025



ESOL Skills for Life

Regulated by Ofqual under DfE

- 8 awarding organisations including Trinity College London

Mapped to the Adult ESOL Core Curriculum

- framework for teaching and learning
- based on the Adult Literacy Core Curriculum
- language systems, skills and literacy

Specific test-taker population

- living, studying and/or working in the UK
- includes refugees and economic migrants

Test-taker motivations (*according to a recent DfE report*)

- improving employment prospects
- integrating into society
- developing life skills for everyday activities
- accessing services and courses

Five levels across the suite:

- Entry 1 (approx. CEFR A1)
- Entry 2 (approx. CEFR A2)
- Entry 3 (approx. CEFR B1)
- Level 1 (approx. CEFR B2)
- Level 2 (approx. CEFR C1)

Three awards at each level:

- Reading - paper-based under exam conditions
- Writing - paper-based under exam conditions
- Speaking & Listening - test-taker interview with examiner



ESOL SfL Revision Project

Initiated by Ofqual

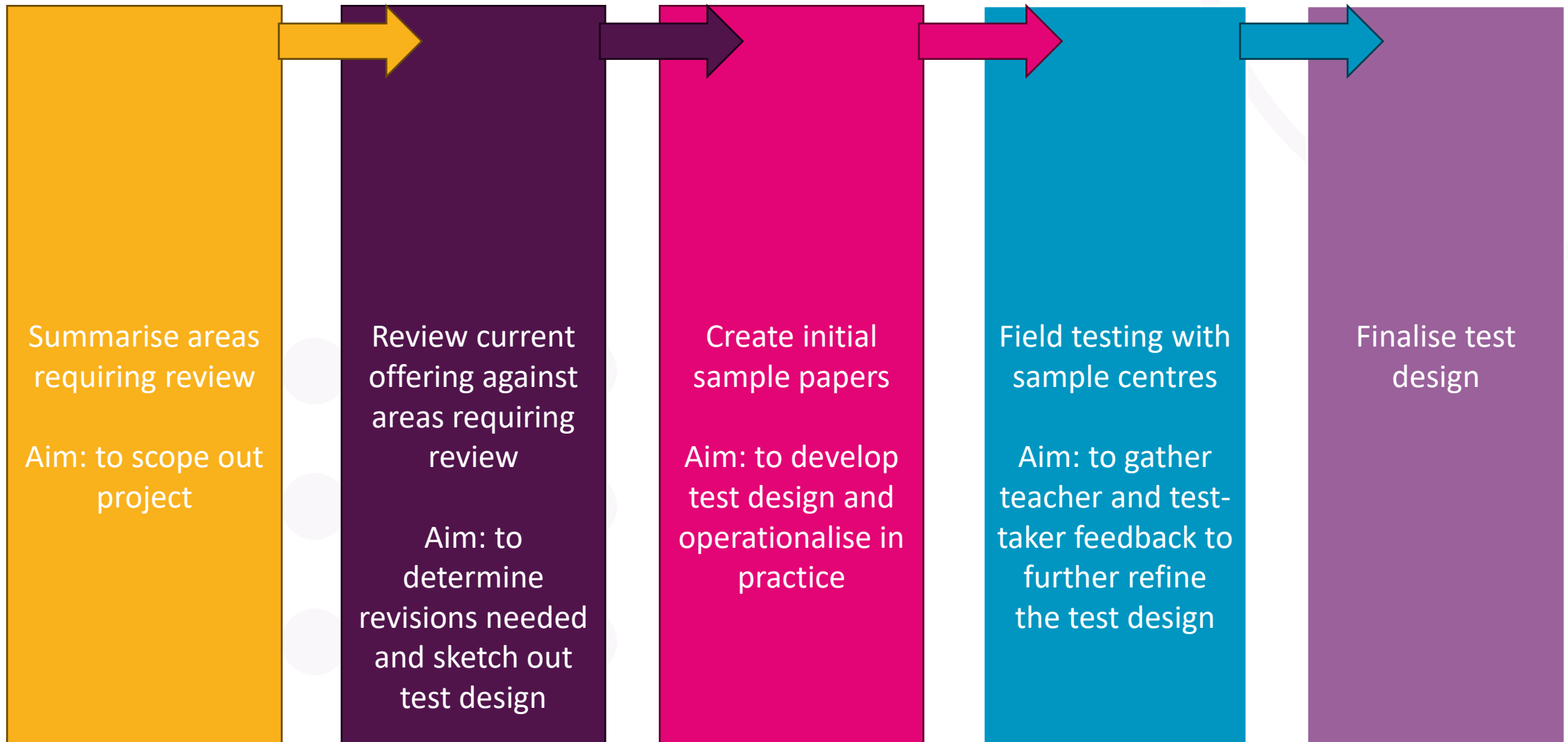
- based on the results of research report (Nov 2022) across AOs
- report compared the offerings of four AOs across three levels E1, E3 and L1 and all three awards reading, writing and speaking & listening
- highlighted areas requiring improvement and variation between AO offerings
- each AO tasked with reviewing the report and planning revisions
- six key findings applicable to the awards - four apply to reading
 1. The guessing factor in selected response items
 2. The language demands of stimulus materials, rubrics and questions, especially regarding Entry 1
 3. Inconsistency in topic demand between different tasks within awarding organisations
 4. The quality of questions in reading and listening comprehension tasks

Other factors informing reading revisions:

- mapping to the Adult ESOL Core Curriculum & CEFR (if appropriate)
- alignment with other Trinity qualifications, eg task sequencing, question types
- language assessment best practice, eg focus on authenticity & real-world skills to better meet test-taker needs and expectations



Revision Project Plan



Summary of Areas Requiring Review

Area Requiring Review	Key Finding	Additional information
Rubric Demand and Clarity	F2 - the language demands of stimulus materials, rubrics and questions	reading load of rubrics is too high for Entry 1
Task Sequencing	n/a	n/a
Text Demand	F2 - the language demands of stimulus materials, rubrics and questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some texts are too long and require reading for detail that is too demanding (E1). • insufficient stretch in reading at higher levels (E3+)
Text Parallelism	F3 - inconsistency in topic demands in tasks	lack of complex tasks and topics at L1+
Question Quality	F1 - the guessing factor in selected response tasks	a high guessing factor in reading comprehension tasks (especially at E3).
Question Range and Appropriacy	F4 - the quality of questions in reading...tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of questions tapping into higher ordering skills eg inference • undue focus on enabling sub-skills, eg alphabet ordering

Current ESOL SfL Reading Paper

Level	Timing	Question Types	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3
E1	45 mins	Objectively-Marked with Answer Keys 3 option Multiple Choice Questions and 3-5 option Multiple Matching Questions	Single (email/text) 6 questions	Multi (various texts) 5 texts - text type 9 questions	Multi (tables and signs) 9 questions
E2	60 mins		Single (email/text) 9 questions	Multi (themed) 5 texts - text purpose 9 questions	Single (article) 6 questions
E3	60 mins		Single (article with gaps) 9 questions	Multi (themed) 5 texts - text purpose 9 questions	Single (article and visual) 9 questions
L1	60 mins		Single (article with gaps) 6 questions	Single (gaps) 10 questions	Multi (themed) 5 texts - text purpose 14 questions
L2	60 mins		Single (article with gaps) 6 questions	Single (gaps) 10 questions	Multi (themed) 5 texts - text purpose 14 questions

Review Findings and Revisions

Area Requiring Review	Review Findings	Revisions
Rubric Demand and Clarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rubrics too high for E1 • inclusion of Answer Sheet instruction • waffly • no rubrics before texts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simplified rubrics and standardised across levels • answer sheet instruction on cover page • concise and precise wording • included rubrics before texts
Task Sequencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sequencing of E1-E3 different from L1&L2 • for E1-E3 Task 2 (Multi-text task) is more complex than Task 3 • visual Literacy not tested or appears in multiple texts • different numbers of questions across different tasks • inconsistencies in text and question order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • align Sequencing of E1-E3 to L1 & L2 • imposed uniformity to task sequencing: Task 1 Visual/Task 2 Single/Task 3 Multi-text • visual Element included in Task 1 across levels • standardise questions across tasks • standardise tasks so text(s) appear before questions
Text Demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • texts too difficult and too cognitively challenging for E1 • texts too easy and simplistic for E3+ • more alignment needed in text genres used for the multi text task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce demand of E1 texts • increase demand of E3+ texts • ensure texts meet AECC requirements
Text Parallelism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • finer grained alignment to equivalent CEFR levels needed • greater word count standardisation needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of EDIA Papyrus tool to ensure text indices are appropriate for the level • standardised word counts

Review Findings and Revisions (Cont)

Area Requiring Review	Review Findings	Revisions
Question Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• use of MCQs/MMQs appropriate• mix of questions and complete sentences• no word length rules• crossed out examples confusing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• continue to apply rigour used when reviewing items• use of question forms only (with word length rules) • clear rubrics
Question Range and Appropriacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• too much reading for detail at E1• too few higher order sub-skills at E3 to L2• too much focus on Gist at E3+• overly-focusing on enabling sub-skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a higher proportion of global reading Qs at E1 and E2• a higher number of subskills tapping into higher order reading subskills at E1 to L2• standardise Assessment Categories across all levels - range and appropriacy• tap into meaningful literacy understanding through reading comprehension

Standardised Sequencing & Questions

Current Task Sequencing and Questions

	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3
E1	Single (email/text) 6 questions	Multi (various texts) 9 questions	Multi (tables and signs) 9 questions
E2	Single (email/text) 9 questions	Multi (themed) 9 questions	Single (article) 6 questions
E3	Single (article with gaps) 9 questions	Multi (themed) 9 questions	Single (article and visual) 9 questions
L1	Single (article with gaps) 6 questions	Single (gaps) 10 questions	Multi (themed) 14 questions
L2	Single (article with gaps) 6 questions	Single (gaps) 10 questions	Multi (themed) 14 questions

Revised Task Sequencing and Questions

(purple changes, pink change of sequence)

	Task 1 Visual	Task 2 Single	Task 3 Multi
E1	Visual Text (tables and signs) 8 questions	Single (email/text) 8 questions	Multi (themed) 8 questions
E2	Visual Text (NEW) 8 questions	Single (email/text) 8 questions	Multi (themed) 8 questions
E3	Visual (article and visual) 9 questions	Single (email/text) 9 questions	Multi (themed) 9 questions
L1	Visual (article with gaps) 10 questions	Single (gaps) 10 questions	Multi (themed) 10 questions
L2	Visual (article with gaps) 10 questions	Single (gaps) 10 questions	Multi (themed) 10 questions

Standardised Assessment Categories

Current Assessment Categories (red areas of concern)

Assessment Category	Number of Questions				
	E1	E2	E3	L1	L2
Gist	4	4	9	11	14
Scanning	3	0	5	3	2
Reading for Detail	4	10	6	5	8
Evaluation	0	0	0	1	0
Inference	1	0	0	1	0
Language	3	3	3	6	6
Literacy	3	4	3	2	0
Visual Literacy	3	3	1	1	0
Numerical Literacy	3	0	0	0	0

Revised Assessment Categories (purple higher, pink lower)

Assessment Category	Number of Questions				
	E1	E2	E3	L1	L2
Gist	8	7	7	7	7
Scanning	4	4	4	2	2
Reading for Detail	2	4	8	8	8
Evaluation	0	0	1	3	3
Inference	0	0	2	3	3
Language	2	2	2	4	4
Literacy	4	4	1	2	2
Visual Literacy	2	3	2	1	1
Numerical Literacy	2	0	0	0	0

Current Entry 1 Task 3 - Table & Signs

Entry 1 - Reading



Task 3


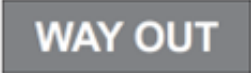
Fairvale Surgery




Doctor	Working Days	Room
Dr Ozel	Monday-Wednesday	3
Dr Jobson	Tuesday-Friday	5
Dr Ahmed	Monday-Thursday	2
Nurse	Wednesday-Friday	1



For information:


- Phone: 07665 734 527
- Visit: www.fairvalesurgery.co.uk
- Pharmacy open Monday-Saturday 7am-5pm
- Call for an appointment from 8am

A  B 

C  D 

E  F  G 

H  I 

J 

page 6. Answer all questions.

Table in context but signs not in context

Decontextualised literacy

Some elements of visual literacy

Entry 1 - Reading

Questions 16-18

Choose one letter for each question. Circle the letter of your answer on your answer sheet.

16. On Friday at Fairvale Surgery, you can see

A Dr Ozel
B Dr Jobson
C Dr Ahmed

17. What room does Dr Ozel work in?

A 1
B 2
C 3

18. You can call to make an appointment from

A 8am
B 7am
C 5pm

Questions 19-24

Match the words to the signs A-J. Circle the letter of the correct sign on your answer sheet.

Example: no lift B

19. waiting room _____

20. reception _____

21. no parking _____

22. wash hands _____

23. no mobiles _____

24. fire exit _____

End of exam

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Revised Entry 1 Task 1- Visual Text

Entry 1 - Reading

Task 1
Read the text about Fairvale Surgery and answer questions 1-8.

Welcome to Fairvale Surgery

Opening Hours: Monday-Friday from 9am to 5pm

Call 07885 615343 to see a doctor.

You should arrive 15 minutes before your appointment.

Doctors	Working Days	Room
Dr Ozel	Monday-Wednesday	3
Dr Jobson	Tuesday-Friday	5
Dr Ahmed	Monday-Thursday	2

Nurses	Working Days	Room
	Wednesday-Friday	1

SURGERY RULES

Visit our website for more information:
www.fairvalesurgery.co.uk

page 2

Answer all questions.

Expanded table into a visual text mirroring real-life reading texts

Q1-4 Gist, Scanning and Detail questions

Q5-8 Literacy and Visual Literacy tested in context mirroring real-life reading skills and purposes

Entry 1 - Reading

Questions 1-8
Choose the correct answer.

- Who is this text for?
A doctors
B nurses
C patients
- Which doctor can you see on Friday?
A Dr Ozel
B Dr Jobson
C Dr Ahmed
- Which room does Dr Ozel work in?
A 1
B 2
C 3
- When can you see a doctor?
A 8am
B 1pm
C 6pm
- Which of the following from the text tells people to do something?
A Welcome to Fairvale Surgery
B Opening Hours: Monday-Friday from 9am to 5pm
C Call 07885 615343 to see a doctor.
- Why is 'SURGERY RULES' written in capital letters?
A It is important information.
B It is a website address.
C It is part of a form.
- Which doctor is a woman?
A Dr Ozel
B Dr Jobson
C Dr Ahmed
- What can you do at the surgery?
A smoke or vape
B bring a pet
C wash your hands


Turn over page

page 3

Revised Entry 2 Task 1- Visual Text


Entry 2 - Reading

Task 1
Read the text about Newcastle Local Food and answer questions 1-8.


Log in / Register  £6.95

Newcastle Local Food - Click and Deliver


Fruit **Vegetables** Meat Spice/Sauce Dairy Bakery Snacks
A-D / E-H / I-M / N-Z / next

ADD  **Broccoli**


From: Byker Farm
 500g £1.15
 1 Kg £2.25

ADD  **Cabbage**


From: Hadrian Fields
 500g 65p
 1 Kg £1.30

ADD  **Carrots**

From: Duke's Farm
 500g 60p
 1 Kg £1.20

ADD  **Cucumber**

From: Percy Meadows
55p / cucumber
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8



We deliver around Newcastle, Gateshead and Sunderland.

- **Zone 1:** £5 / delivery, or free delivery when you spend over £25.
- **Zone 2:** £8 / delivery, or free delivery when you spend over £40.

page 2 Answer all questions.

Visual Text mirroring
real-life texts
instructional texts
including visual
images appropriate
to this level (eg maps)
as well as sequencing
(eg A-Z)

Q1-6 Gist, Scanning
and Detail
questions

Q7-8 Visual Literacy
tested in context
mirroring real-life
reading skills and
purposes

Entry 2 - Reading

Questions 1-8

Choose the correct answer.

1. What is the purpose of this website?
A to show supermarkets near Newcastle
B to sell food to people near Newcastle
C to show delivery jobs near Newcastle
2. Which vegetable is from Byker Farm?
A broccoli
B cabbage
C carrots
3. How much does one kilogram of cabbage cost?
A 65p
B £1.30
C 60p
4. What is the cost of the customer's order so far?
A £6.95
B £2.25
C £1.20
5. What is the charge for deliveries to Durham?
A £5
B £8
C £25
6. What else can you buy from this shop?
A bread
B toys
C meals
7. Which vegetable will be on the next page?
A avocado
B potatoes
C garlic
8. Which town is outside the delivery zone?
A Blyth
B Ashington
C Hexham

Turn over page

page 3

Current Entry 3 Task 1- Single Text

Entry 3 - Reading

Entry 3 - Reading

Task 1

Visiting The Shard

Paragraph one
For my birthday, my friend bought tickets online for The Shard in London. I didn't know the building so I looked on the internet to get information. The pictures of the famous glass tower looked amazing! The tickets arrived in the post and I started looking forward to the trip.

Paragraph two
A (Example). It was a lovely, sunny day and the sun was shining on the glass. The Shard was **massive**. It was so tall I could hardly see the top. I just managed to get a photo of the whole tower.

Paragraph three
____ **1.** ____ Although we arrived early with our tickets, we still had to queue to get through the safety checks. Then, I started feeling uncomfortable in the lift because it was crowded and went up so fast. **Thankfully**, when we got out on the 72nd floor, I felt better after a few minutes.

Paragraph four
____ **2.** ____ It was such a **glorious** day we could see for miles. I thought London looked spectacular in the sunshine. My friend liked the view too but she was not as excited as me.

Paragraph five
____ **3.** ____ This was on the 31st floor. Here, the view was still fantastic and the service was great. I really recommend going to The Shard. I will definitely go again for a coffee because then you don't pay an entrance fee.

Text generally fine for the level but largely informational

Q1-3 Missing Sentences (Gist)

Q4-6 Deducing meaning in context

Q7-9 Reading for Detail

Questions 1-3

Four sentences are missing from the text on page 2. Look at the following sentences (A-E) and decide which one best fits each gap. There is one sentence you do not need and an example. Circle the letter of your answer **on your answer sheet**.

- A (Example) ~~I was not disappointed when I first saw the building.~~
- B There were visitors from all over the world.
- C I will never forget the wonderful view.
- D The next part of our visit was not good.
- E We spent the rest of the afternoon in the café.

Questions 4-6

Choose the letter of the closest meaning for each word. Look at the text carefully to help you decide on the best answer. Circle the letter **on your answer sheet**.

- 4. **massive** (paragraph two)
 - A fascinating
 - B strange
 - C huge
- 5. **Thankfully** (paragraph three)
 - A Sadly
 - B Suddenly
 - C Fortunately
- 6. **glorious** (paragraph four)
 - A quiet
 - B lovely
 - C cloudy

Questions 7-9

Choose the letter of the best answer and circle it **on your answer sheet**.

- 7. According to paragraph three, the friends had to queue because they
 - A arrived very early
 - B needed to buy tickets
 - C had to pass through security
- 8. According to paragraph four,
 - A the writer enjoyed the view more than her friend
 - B her friend liked the view more than the writer
 - C they felt the same about the view
- 9. According to paragraph five, in the future the writer
 - A hopes to get better service from the staff
 - B wants to pay for another ticket to The Shard
 - C plans to visit the café in The Shard another time

Revised Entry 3 Task 2- Single Text

Entry 3 - Reading

Task 2
Read the text about visiting The Shard and answer questions 10-18.

Paragraph 1
I have always liked interesting buildings. So, for my birthday, my friend bought us tickets online to visit The Shard in London. I had only ever seen pictures of this famous glass tower. I was excited about visiting it. On the day of our trip, we went to the train station, bought our return tickets to London, and set off.

Paragraph 2
I was not disappointed when I first saw the building. It looked even better than the pictures. The Shard was **massive**. It was so tall I could hardly see the top. I just managed to get a photo of the whole tower as well as a selfie in front of it.

Paragraph 3
____10____. Although we arrived on time with our tickets, we still had to queue to get through the safety checks. There was such a huge crowd of people that I started feeling uncomfortable in the lift. Thankfully, when everyone got out on the 72nd floor, which was much more spacious, I started to feel much better.

Paragraph 4
____11____. It was such a **glorious** day that we could see for miles. I thought London looked spectacular in the sunshine. I could see all the famous sites, such as St. Paul's Cathedral and the River Thames. I could've stayed there for hours. My friend had been there a few times, so her reaction was not quite the same as mine.

Paragraph 5
____12____. Here, the view was still fantastic, and the service was great. We had tea, delicious cake and a long chat before taking the train home. I really recommend going to The Shard. It's an impressive building and you will have a great time there.

Questions 10-12
Choose the best first sentence (A-C) for each paragraph. There is one first sentence you don't need.

10. Paragraph 3 _____

11. Paragraph 4 _____

12. Paragraph 5 _____

A There were visitors from all over the world.
B I will never forget the wonderful view.
C The next part of our visit was not good.
D We spent the rest of the afternoon in the café.

Revisions to text so contains opinions and nuances of meaning to generate Eval and Inf Qs

Q10-12 Missing Sentences (Gist)

Q13-16 Reading for Detail, Evaluation and Inference

Q17-18 Deducing meaning from context

Entry 3 - Reading

Questions 13-16
Choose the correct answer.

13. According to paragraph 1, what did the writer do first?
A paid for their journey to London.
B looked at photos of The Shard.
C got a great birthday present.

14. According to paragraph 3, why did the friends have to queue?
A They arrived very late.
B They needed to get tickets.
C They had to go through security.

15. In paragraph 3, why did the writer feel uncomfortable?
A The Shard was very small.
B The Shard was very crowded.
C The Shard was very tall.

16. In paragraph 4, how did the writer's friend feel about the view?
A The friend wanted to spend more time looking at the view.
B The friend was not as excited about the view as the writer.
C The friend had never seen the view from The Shard before.

Questions 17-18
Choose the word with the same meaning as the word in **bold**.

17. **massive**
A amusing
B attractive
C huge

18. **glorious**
A interesting
B lovely
C cloudy

Turn over page

page 3

Current Entry 1 Task 2 - Multi-Text

Entry 1 - Reading

Task 2
Text A

Text B

Fairton Surgery
1 Willow Lane, HT6 7LX
You can see the nurse on
08.02.22 at 2pm

Text C

Text D

Country Cafe
5 Sid Street
BL3 4BG

Sandwich	£2.00
Ice cream	£1.20
Orange juice	£1.00
Total	£4.20

17.06.22
Thank you! Have a good day

Text E

page 4

Answer all questions.

5 decontextualised texts

Text type questions

Numerical literacy tested without context

Vocabulary tested using images

Entry 1 - Reading

Questions 7-9
Choose the letter of the correct text on page 4 and circle it on your answer sheet.

Example: A is a baby card
7. _____ is a receipt
8. _____ is a text message
9. _____ is an appointment card

Questions 10-12
Choose the letter of the correct text on page 4 and circle it on your answer sheet.

Example: D has the number five
10. _____ has a date in February
11. _____ has the number nine
12. _____ has a date in August

Questions 13-15
These words are in the texts. Choose the letter of the correct picture for each word. Circle the letter of your answer on your answer sheet.

Example: Ice cream A
13. mobile phone _____
14. sandwich _____
15. nurse _____

Turn over page

page 5

Revised Entry 1 Task 3- Multi-Text

Entry 1 - Reading

Task 3
Read the five texts and answer questions 17-24.

Text 1


West Easedale Gift Shop
5 High Street,
West Easedale

Greetings card £1.99
Teddy £9.00
Blue balloon £3.00

TOTAL £13.99

Text 2

It's a boy



Congratulations!

Text 3

West Easedale
Bus 7

Valid on
Saturday 4 July

From
Churchill Street

To
West Easedale Hospital

£2.00

Text 4

Welcome to
West Easedale Hospital
Mother and Baby Ward

Visiting Hours
6-8pm Monday to Sunday

Text 5

Hi Zainab
Congratulations on the birth of your son Kamal.
We enjoyed visiting you in hospital today.
See you soon!
Afia

page 6 Answer all questions.

5 texts in context
'Zainab's baby'

Text type questions

Gist and detail
questions

Numerical literacy in
context

Entry 1 - Reading

Questions 17-19
Match each text to its text type (A-D). There is one text type you don't need.

17. Text 1 _____
18. Text 2 _____
19. Text 3 _____

A a sign
B a bus ticket
C a receipt
D a greetings card

Questions 20-24
Choose the correct answer.

20. What are the texts about?
A a supermarket visit
B a doctor's appointment
C a new baby

21. Where is the gift shop?
A Churchill Street
B in the hospital
C High Street

22. Who wrote Text 5?
A Zainab
B Afia
C Kamal

23. In Text 1, how much does a teddy cost?
A £3.00
B £1.99
C £9.00

24. In Text 3, what is the bus number?
A 7
B 2
C 4

Important
Remember to circle your answers on the answer sheet.

1. What is this text about?
A books
B television
C cinema

Question	Answer
1.	A B C
2.	A B C
3.	A B C

End of exam

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Field Testing

Methodology

- representatives from 3-4 centres
- 100 Students from Entry 1 to Level 2
- use initial sample papers in class
- discuss with students
- provide specific feedback via a survey
 - mix of quantitative and qualitative responses
 - 23 questions in total - 20 minutes to complete
 - task sequencing
 - text suitability and authenticity
 - question sequencing gist to detail
 - reading skills needed in the real world
 - plus open comments and biodata
- define rationales for revisions
- carefully word questions to check assumptions



Task Sequencing Rationales & Questions

Update(s)	Rationale(s)
<p>The sequence of task types has been standardised across all levels from Entry 1 to Level 2.</p>	<p>This standardised sequencing ensures familiarity with the structure of Trinity ESOL Skills for Life Reading Papers as test takers move up through the levels. It also makes exam preparation more straightforward for teachers and centres.</p>
<p>Tasks have been sequenced so that every paper starts with the simplest task and progresses to the most complex; from tasks including texts with a visual element (Task 1), to single text tasks (Task 2), to multi-text tasks (Task 3).</p>	<p>This revised sequencing reflects classroom practice, where easier tasks may serve as a warm-up and confidence builder before more challenging ones. It may also assist test takers with their time management during the exam.</p>

Paper and Task Sequencing

13. In the sample papers, we have standardised the task sequencing of all papers in the suite. Task 1 has a visual element to each text, Task 2 is a single text and Task 3 is a multi-text. How helpful do you think this is for candidates preparing for ESOL Sfl exams? *

Very helpful Somewhat helpful Neither helpful nor unhelpful Somewhat unhelpful Very unhelpful

14. Please elaborate briefly on your response to question 13. Please include the specific level(s) and task(s) you refer to in your comments (e.g., Entry 1 Task 1). *

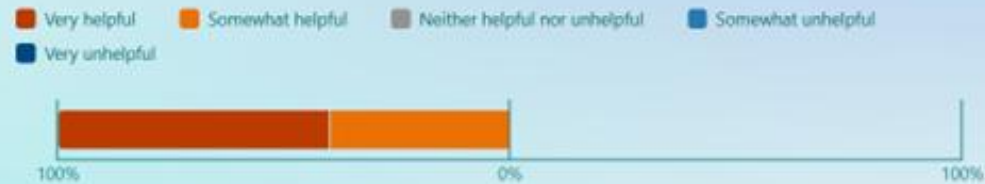
15. We have made some changes to the layout of the exam booklets. How helpful do you think this is for candidates preparing for ESOL Sfl exams? *

Very helpful Somewhat helpful Neither helpful nor unhelpful Somewhat unhelpful Very unhelpful

16. Please elaborate briefly on your response to question 15. Please include the specific level(s) and task(s) you refer to in your comments (e.g., Entry 1 Task 1). *

Task Sequencing Survey Results

In the sample papers, we have standardised the task sequencing of all papers in the suite. Task 1 has a visual ele...

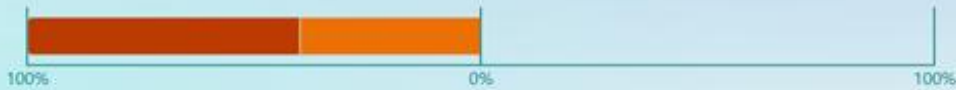


- ▶ "I think that standardising through the levels is extremely helpful for students progressing through the levels, as they know what to expect. It is helpful to have a variety of tasks, as they will meet these in their everyday lives. The introduction of a visual element in L2 Task 1 is particularly helpful, as ensuring that all features of a text are read is an essential skill. "
- ▶ "Entry 2 task 1, task 2 are particularly helpful"
- ▶ "It familiarises the learners with the format as they progress through the levels."
- ▶ "Better for managing time for each task"

Task Sequencing Survey Results

We have made some changes to the layout of the exam booklets. How helpful do you think this is for candidates...

Very helpful Somewhat helpful Neither helpful nor unhelpful Somewhat unhelpful
Very unhelpful



- ▶ "ESOL students like most of us like to have a feel for what's coming next so it's not a shock. Yes this element was helpful for them and for the teachers to be able to practise each task and produce our own teaching material using this format."
- ▶ "The current practice papers [current test design]are very confusing, and some learners find it difficult to locate information even when they have done a few. It is much easier to locate which questions go with which texts in both levels that I trialled [revised test design]."
- ▶ "Easier for them to navigate for Entry 2."
- ▶ "Better organised. Easier to read questions and consult texts"
- ▶ "Seems generally ok but the learners found Task 2 a little difficult as they got confused as to what to do. They seemed ok after a little help."

Text Suitability and Authenticity

Update(s)	Rationale(s)
Texts are more authentic in nature, reflecting texts test takers will see in the real world.	Texts mirror real-life reading practices.
Literacy skills are now tested through reading comprehension, instead of discretely. For example, understanding alphabetical ordering is tested through reading comprehension questions based on texts.	The testing of literacy skills through reading comprehension better reflects real-life reading practices. It also promotes the practical benefits of applying literacy knowledge.

Text Suitability and Authenticity

17. The texts are suitable for candidates at each level. Please indicate your response to this statement below. *

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A
Entry 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entry 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entry 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Level 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Level 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

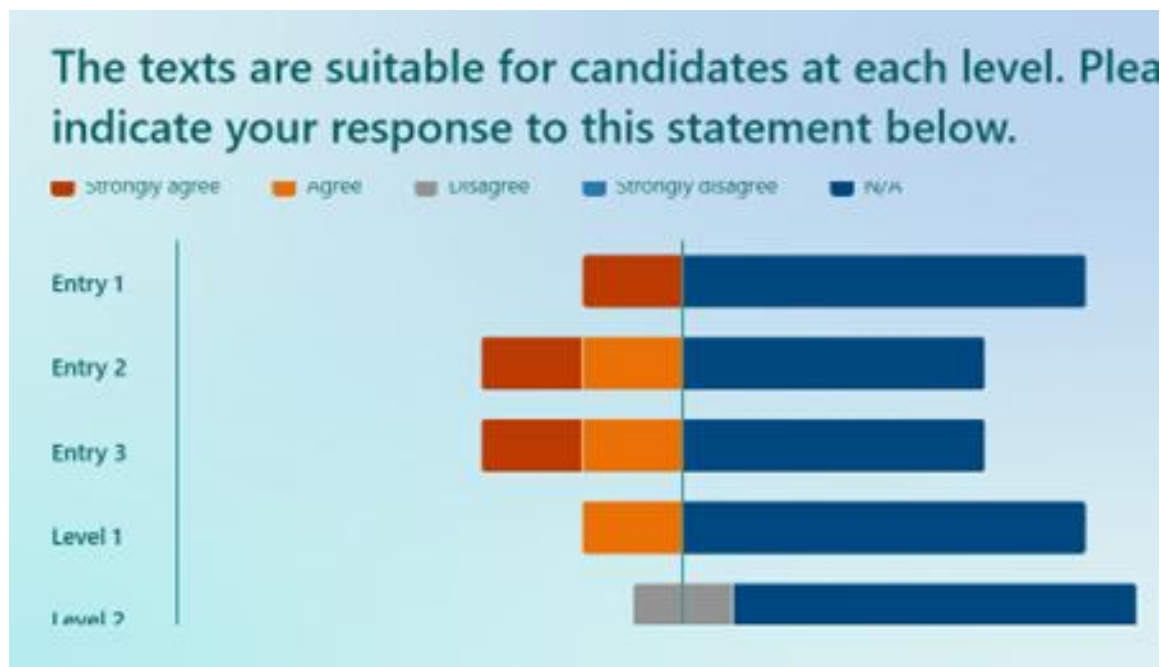
18. Please elaborate briefly on your response to question 17. Please include the specific level(s) and task(s) you refer to in your comments (e.g., Entry 1 Task 1). *

19. The texts in the ESOL SFL Revised Reading Sample Papers are similar to texts students are exposed to in the real world. Please indicate your response to this statement below. *

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A
Entry 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entry 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entry 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Level 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Level 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

20. Please elaborate briefly on your response to question 19. Please include the specific level(s) and task(s) you refer to in your comments (e.g., Entry 1 Task 1). *

Text Suitability and Authenticity Results



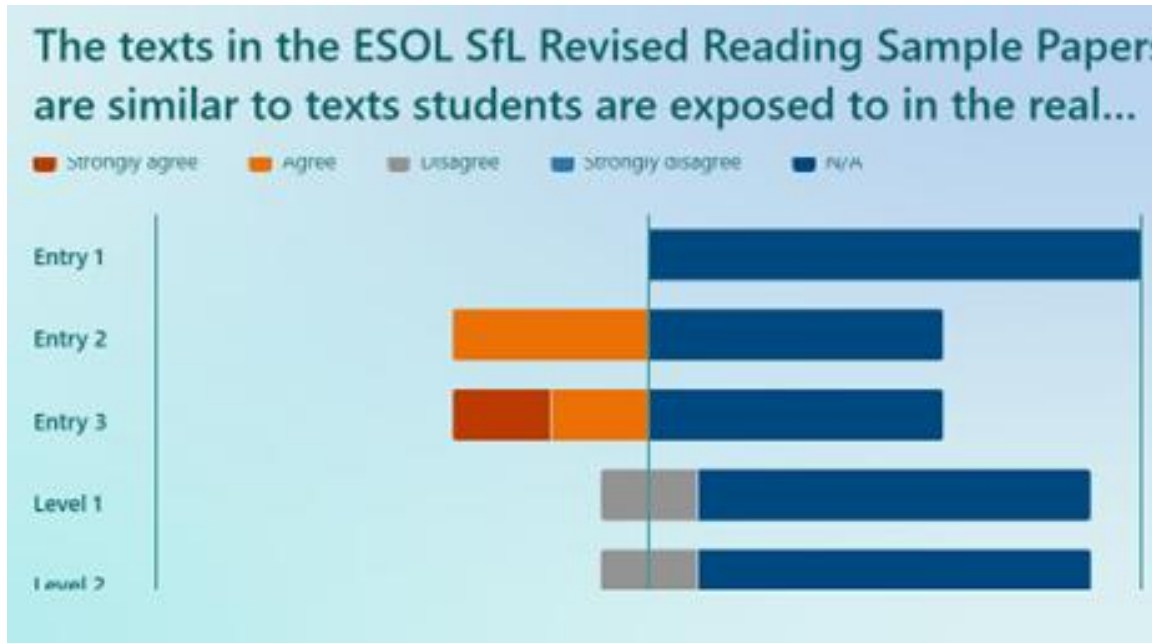
"E3 yes they should be able to answer these questions...some will struggle but actually they are not entered unless at the level required. But this does as a sample task help them become prepared."

"Entry 2 task 2 especially more relevant and accessible"

"Level 1 All tasks are authentic"

"L2 Task 1 and 2 were not generally of interest to my class of learners and there were several subject-specific words which made it hard for them to understand the gist. E3 tasks were useful, relevant and of interest to my learners."

Text Suitability and Authenticity Results



"Much easier to understand yes must better for them to grasp"

"Entry 2 task 1, task 2 and task 3"

"I have already commented that the tasks are authentic and suitable."

"I believe that you would need a specific interest in the topics in Task 1 and Task 2 of the L2 paper to be exposed to this type of text. "

"Texts are but skills being tested are not [Level 1]."

Question Sequencing Gist to Detail

Update(s)	Rationale(s)
The sequencing of questions within tasks has been standardised, now always progressing from text level gist understanding to sentence level comprehension, and for some tasks, to deducing meaning from context at word level.	Sequencing questions from whole text understanding to detailed understanding reflects real-life reading and classroom practices. It will also make the structure of each task type more familiar to test takers progressing as they move up the levels. Test takers and teachers will need to spend less time understanding task requirements, simplifying exam preparation.

Questions

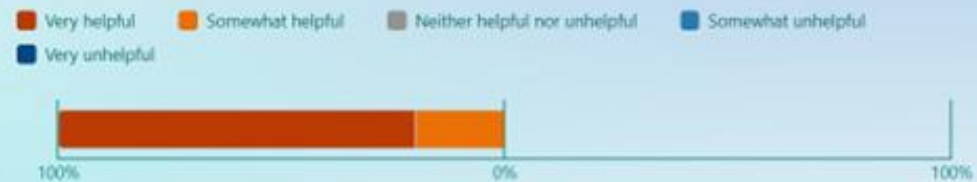
21. For each task, we have sequenced the questions from whole text understanding (gist) to understanding details at sentence level (reading for detail)? How helpful do you think this is for candidates preparing for ESOL SFL exams? *

Very helpful Somewhat helpful Neither helpful nor unhelpful Somewhat unhelpful Very unhelpful

22. Please elaborate briefly on your response to question 21. Please include the specific level(s) and task(s) you refer to in your comments (e.g., Entry 1 Task 1). *

Question Sequencing Results

For each task, we have sequenced the questions from whole text understanding (gist) to understanding details...



- ▶ "E3 the overall look is more user friendly."
- ▶ "It is extremely helpful for the questions to be sequenced. Learners can be confident that they know the structure of the exam and I believe that as a result they will achieve a better result with regard to this aspect of the new paper."
- ▶ "Gives the learners opportunity to answer all sorts of questions."
- ▶ "Good idea for Level 1"

Reading Subskills

Update(s)	Rationale(s)
Building on our current approach, we are further incorporating the Adult ESOL Core Curriculum criteria to better define the subskills assessed in each task and at each level. For example, at Entry 1, a greater emphasis is placed on skills such as reading for gist, while more advanced skills - such as evaluation and inference - are introduced from Entry 3 onwards.	Having an appropriate balance of questions tapping into each reading subskill ensures that the reading subskills required by the Adult ESOL Core curriculum at each level are more precisely reflected in Trinity ESOL Skills for Life Reading tasks. This allows test takers the opportunity to better demonstrate their reading subskills at each level.

9. The sample papers test the reading skills students need in the real world. Please indicate your response to this statement below. *

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A
Entry 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entry 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entry 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Level 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Level 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Please elaborate briefly on your response to question 9. Please include the specific level(s) and task(s) you refer to in your comments (e.g., Entry 1 Task 1) *

Reading Subskills Results



E3 - Q9 was answered well by students, many study maths so this would not be a problem for them and graphs have been in the Reading Exams for a long time. "

"Entry 3 topics were very user-friendly and I think that they are an improvement on the current papers. However, Task 1 and Task 2 were very difficult and the learners did not find the topics interesting. Even learners who normally achieve 25-30 in the current papers were not able to finish in the given time and some of these would not have passed. "

"Tasks 2 has texts in them that are more easily accessible and appropriate for students at E2 level than previous papers. "

"Task 1 - Has a realistic context of a doctor's surgery where learners can practice finding specific information. Also task 3 gets the students acquainted with realistic everyday texts. "

"Level 1 Task 3 was well structured and appropriate

Free Comments

"I felt that Questions 1-3 were easier to follow in terms of matching paragraphs with purpose. It was quite ambiguous for students before and always left them slightly puzzled. Also on the front of the paper you have fully explained how to use the answer sheet. Whilst we explain in class sometimes in an exam they forget and panic. I also like that the Tasks are easier to follow due them being face to face so students are not looking over the page to answer questions. Much less stressful for them."

"The Entry 3 paper was easier to follow and the topics were useful and interesting."

"Having clearer instruction tasks, less "complicated", matching titles to paragraphs instead of using the sequencers (which used to be quite confusing for students)."

"Very clear instructions at the start."

- ▶ "I suppose my only issue might be to use The Shard to write about. Most student know all the main buildings but most of them struggled with this one. A lot of students have just arrived here and whilst they do know the main attractions in London many were unfamiliar with this Building. "
- ▶ "E3 - the students should understand what you mean by THE WRITER, however I think it would be just a tad easier for them to follow if you entered a little more from the passage for example 13 According to paragraph 1 what did the writer do first 'on the day of the trip'.15 In paragraph 3 why did the writer 'start to feel uncomfortable'. Just an idea. "

Conclusions

Overall, the field-testing stage proved extremely useful to confirm some suggested revisions offered a better test-taker experience while also offering some valuable suggestions for further refinements to the test design.

Strengths

- task sequencing standardisation useful for test takers, especially those that progress through the levels
- task layout much clearer for test takers than the current layout
- revised task sequencing helps test takers manage their time
- E1-L1 texts considered suitable and authentic
- gist to detail sequencing is helpful and may lead to higher exam results
- good variety of questions
- realistic contexts at Entry 1
- multiple matching much easier to understand than sequencing

Points to Address

- Task 2 format confusing - need to revise or address in information booklet
- L2 texts may be too subject specific - need to review
- E3 texts were 'difficult'
- glossing needed of 'The Shard' - don't assume knowledge as some students are new to the UK
- greater signposting needed in questions (Entry 3)



**THANK YOU
ANY QUESTIONS?**

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