

## Interpreting Skills for Life Results

### Speaking and Listening

#### Entry 1

You have received a results slip which shows your Entry 1 student's results as the following:

#### Samira Mohamed

3/3 2/3 2/3 3/3 2/3 1/3 2/3

In each pair of numbers, the first 3 (**3/3**) shows the score the candidate achieved, whilst the second 3 (**3/3**) shows the maximum score the candidate could have achieved. In this case, then, Samira scored the highest possible mark in the very first criteria. In total, she scored 15 out of a possible 21 marks. As the pass mark is always **two-thirds** in the Speaking & Listening exams, this means that Samira passed her exam overall.

You will need the following to help you make sense of what each mark refers to:

- **The generic performance descriptors.** This table can be found on p23 of the Introduction booklet.
- **The task-specific mark scheme.** This can be found on p7 of the Entry 1 syllabus (or p7 of the all-levels Speaking & Listening syllabus).

The task-specific mark scheme has two sections, the first of which is divided into 4 separate criteria and the second of which is divided into 3 separate criteria. The marks on the results slip follow the criteria in the exact same order as laid out in this table. So, Samira's marks can be broken down as follows:

3/3<sub>A</sub>    2/3<sub>B</sub>    2/3<sub>C</sub>    3/3<sub>D</sub>    2/3<sub>E</sub>    1/3<sub>F</sub>    2/3<sub>G</sub>

The first four grades (labelled here as A-D for convenience) relate to Task 1. Samira performs well in Task 1 overall.

#### A. Task 1, Speak to communicate - 3/3

This means that the examiner looked at the criteria in this part of the task-specific mark scheme and felt that Samira achieved these criteria to the 'secure pass' standard laid out in the generic performance descriptors.

#### B. Task 1, Listen and respond - 2/3

(2/3) means that Samira has performed to a 'pass' level according to the generic performance descriptors in the list of criteria given in the 'listen and respond' section of the task-specific mark scheme.

#### C. Task 1, Engage in discussion - 2/3

Again, Samira has achieved a 'pass' according to the generic performance descriptors when being assessed on her ability to 'engage in discussion' as outlined by the criteria in the task-specific mark scheme.

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**D. Task 1, Accuracy and range of the key language items - 3/3**

This time, Samira achieved the highest possible score, meaning that according to the generic performance descriptors she has achieved 'secure pass' standard for the criteria laid out in the 'accuracy and range' section of the task-specific mark scheme.

The next three grades (labelled E-F) relate to Task 2. We can see that Samira performed less well in this task overall.

**E. Task 2, Speak to communicate - 2/3**

Samira's grade shows that she is slightly less able when it comes to Task 2 than she was in Task 1. However, she still achieved a 'pass' grade according to the generic performance descriptors.

**F. Task 1, Listen and respond - 1/3**

On this topic, Samira fulfils only the 'below pass' generic performance descriptor when taken in conjunction with the task-specific mark scheme criteria for this task. Overall, taking both tasks into account, we can see that Listening is Samira's weaker area.

**G. Task 1, Accuracy and range of the key language items - 2/3**

Once again, Samira's performance on this task for this set of criteria is slightly lower than her performance in the first task, but this time she does achieve a 'pass'.

Samira achieves a 'pass' grade, because her overall grade is 15/21 (over two-thirds), even though her total grade in Task 2 is lower than two-thirds. It is not necessary to pass both tasks in order to pass this exam overall.

### Entry 2 - Level 2

Please read the notes above, relating to the Entry 1 candidate, to see how the assessment system works in general. However, remember the following points:

- From E2 - L2 there will always be **three tasks** (rather than just two as in Entry 1), as well as **a second component, the group discussion**. This means that there are more marks to be allocated at these levels (10 grades in total at each level).
- Levels 1 and 2 have a wider range of mark allocation. Whereas the highest possible grade for any single section from Entry 1 - Entry 3 is always 3, the highest grade available for Levels 1 and 2 is 6. A 'pass' is still two-thirds, a 'secure pass' is considered to be 6.

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### Writing

#### Entry 1 - Level 2

You receive the following set of results for your student:

##### **Sayid Hassan**

4/6 2/6 1/3 6/6 2/6 1/3

As in the Speaking & Listening exam, each pair of numbers shows the grade the candidate achieved (before the slash), as well as the total mark available for that criteria (after the slash). In the above example, therefore, the first pair of numbers shows that Sayid achieved 4 out of a possible 6. Again, as in the Speaking & Listening exam, the pass mark in the Writing exam is always **two-thirds** of the total possible grade.

Each set of three marks refers to one task. At Entry 1 - Entry 3, there are always two tasks on a paper, so the candidate will receive 6 grades in total (as in the example for Sayid). At Levels 1 and 2, there are three tasks on each paper, so the candidate will receive 9 grades in total.

You will need the following to help you make sense of these grades:

- **The generic performance descriptors** (p24 of the Introduction booklet)
- **The task-specific mark scheme** (e.g. p19 of E1 syllabus, page varies depending on level)

This **always** means that the first, fourth and, if applicable, seventh grades refer to 'Text focus', the second, fifth and eighth grades refer to 'Sentence focus' and the third, sixth and ninth grades refer to 'Word focus'. For Sayid's first task, then, this breaks down as follows:

#### **1) Text focus: writing composition - 4/6**

As 4 out of 6 is exactly two-thirds, we can see that Sayid achieved a 'pass' level according to the generic performance descriptors, when applied to the specific criteria laid out in the task-specific mark scheme for Task 1 at his level. In general, this section relates to the candidate's ability to answer the question set with appropriate information and in an appropriate manner, as well as to follow the conventions of the style required, e.g. letter, form, report etc. Naturally, this ability will vary greatly from level to level so it is important to check the task-specific criteria at each level carefully. The text focus section is always out of 6, at all levels.

#### **2) Sentence focus: grammar and punctuation - 2/6**

2 out of 6 shows that Sayid's grammar and punctuation, as required by the task-specific mark scheme for his level, falls very much within the 'below pass' section of the generic performance descriptors. Sayid really needs to work on this area. The sentence focus section is always out of 6, at all levels.

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### **3) Word focus: spelling and handwriting - 1/3**

Again, Sayid's grade falls into the 'below pass' category of the generic performance descriptors when related to the task-specific mark scheme criteria. He is either spelling most common words (for his level) incorrectly, or writing so illegibly that it is difficult to interpret some words, or both. The word focus section is always out of 3, at all levels.

Sayid's second task can be broken down in exactly the same way - we can see that he performs very well on the 'Text focus', so we can assume that he has fully answered all parts of the question, in a coherent and logical way, using paragraphs where necessary and the required format. However, his 'Sentence focus' and 'Word focus' grades are the same as in Task 1, so we can deduce that Sayid needs to work on his grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting.

Each individual Writing task, regardless of level, is worth a maximum of 15 marks. As with the other Trinity Skills for Life exams, candidates do not need to pass each task to pass overall. It is the total grade for the whole paper which counts. Sayid achieves 16 out of a possible 30, lower than two-thirds, so his overall result is 'below pass'.

## **Reading**

### **Entry 1 - Entry 3**

For these levels your candidate will receive a result either out of 15 (Entry 1) or 20 (Entry 2 and 3). This will look like this:

#### **Munir Shah**

13/15

Once again, at Entry 1 - Entry 3 only, the pass mark is two-thirds. For Entry 1, therefore, the pass mark is 10/15. For Entry 2 - 3, the pass mark is 13/20. In the above example, Munir has achieved a 'pass' grade.

At these levels we do not provide a break-down of the marks, as there is no task-specific mark scheme due to the variable nature of a Reading exam. Each individual item varies from month to month.

### **Level 1 and 2**

These exams are not produced by Trinity, as they are the National Adult Literacy Tests, they are provided to us by QCA. The pass mark varies for each paper but is usually around two-thirds.