

Information about the tasks**The Telephone Task 1**

This is an opportunity for a conversation over the telephone where the candidate aims to resolve a problem that reflects a real life situation in the world of work.

- The candidate is given a written prompt, presenting the candidate with a situation, which must be addressed
- The candidate telephones the examiner, who is in a separate room, and initiates the interaction
- The examiner will fulfill his or her role in the interaction as required by the prompt
- Candidates are free to be themselves although are required to fulfill the demands of the role as required by the situation described in the prompt
- It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure a successful outcome to the situation outlined in the prompt
- Candidates will need to observe standard conventions of formal and/or informal interaction depending on the situation
- At the end of the task, the examiner will end telephone call

Telephone task 2 (at SEW B2, B2+ and C1)

This is an opportunity for spontaneous communication over the phone where the candidate takes control of the interaction

- This task follows directly on from the Telephone task and is also conducted over the telephone
- The examiner calls the candidate and gives an initial verbal prompt that gives rise to an interaction maintained and controlled by the candidate
- The examiner and candidate will remain in role during this task
- The candidate's own initiating skills are most important, for example, through the use of questioning techniques, seeking clarification, politely refusing or expressing reservations
- The candidate is required to initiate 'turns' in the conversation and control the direction of the interaction
- The tasks require an authentic exchange of information and opinions, with the language functions listed at each level arising naturally out of the task

Sample SEW Telephone tasks - notes

Those responsible for preparing candidates for the telephone tasks are strongly advised to help them practise:

- making telephone calls in the same way as in the examination
- giving information and asking questions, as well as answering questions to address the situation in the prompt fully
- forming questions using the grammatical structures of the level where appropriate
- holding conversations which naturally result in the use of the language functions of the grade
- using strategies to maintain the flow of conversation
- taking the initiative and controlling the direction of the conversation.

On the following pages are some **SAMPLE** interactive prompts for the Intermediate stage. Please note these are samples and will **NOT** be used in an actual examination.

At levels B2, B2+ and C1 the examiner will introduce the phase by saying:

Hello _____, this is _____ calling from _____ again. There is something else I want to talk to you about....

Sample SEW Telephone tasks

SEW B1

1. You are at your local airport, but you have left your passport on your desk. Phone your colleague to explain the problem and ask him/her to bring your passport to the airport as soon as possible.

Points to consider:

Flight: Departs in 4 hours
Where to meet: Check-in desk 59, Terminal 2
Where passport is: Next to your computer

2. You are going to travel to Cape Town for a meeting next week and you want to book a hotel room. Phone the Hotel Liberty to make a reservation and pay by credit card.

Points to consider:

Number of nights: 3
Room: Standard single, non-smoking
Credit card number: 4579 3921 3051 9547

SEW B2

- 1a: You have recently completed a work placement with a multinational company. A local college have asked you to give a talk describing your experience. Phone the college to discuss the details.

Points to consider:

Time and location: Where and when?
Content: What is required?
Format: Workshop or lecture?
Equipment: What is available?

1b: *Hello _____*, Many companies appear to want new employees with practical experience rather than an academic qualification. There are advantages and disadvantages.

2a: You are arranging an end of year dinner for your organisation at a local hotel. Phone the venue to secure a booking for the best possible price; you have a budget of \$700.

Points to consider:

Number of guests: 50 - 70
Duration of event: A Saturday night 19:00 – 23:00
Food and drink: Fixed menu?
Entertainment options: Disco /live music?

2b: *Hello _____*, We're calling to find out more information from our customers about what they think is most important when organising an event.

SEW B2+

1a: You have agreed to give a training presentation on behalf of a colleague but something has come up and you cannot do it. Phone them to explain.

Points to consider:

Explain the situation
Express your disappointment
Consider possible alternatives

1b: *Hello _____*, I've just been thinking, rather than having training from within the company, it would be better to bring in consultants to run our training programs.

2a: You bought a lap-top computer from an on-line retailer, but when it was delivered it was faulty. After receiving no response to your emails, call the company to discuss the situation.

Points to consider:

Express your dissatisfaction
Explain nature of problem
Demand refund

2b: *Hello _____*, we are thinking about the possibility of introducing a compulsory fee to cover insurance for items bought on-line. This would be about 25% of the total cost.

SEW C1

1a: The closure of your company's fitness centre is being considered. As the financial director of your department phone the managing director and establish the reasons and challenge the proposal.

Points to consider:

Establish rationale for proposed closure
Express your reservations
Challenge the rationale
Impact on staff morale

1b: *Hello _____*, I'm thinking about holding the next annual staff conference in New York. I think the expense is justified.

2a: You are the finance director of an international company and have decided that all air travel for staff should be economy class. If a member of staff wishes to travel business class, they would have to pay for their own upgrade. Call the managing director to justify your decision.

Points to consider:

Justification for cuts

Implications on staff

Implementation

Possible exceptions

2b: *Hello _____*, It's come to my attention that the current computer hardware is out of date, I'm of the opinion it needs upgrading but I'm well aware that we're trying to reduce spending.