



Hinchingbrooke School

Inspiring excellence Fulfilling potential

MFL Department

Improving your own learning performance



Frequently Asked Questions

What do I need to do for a controlled assessment?

A: You will need to prepare materials for the assessment with your teacher. Think first about the questions you could be asked, prepare to answer them and (for speaking assessments) think of a few questions you could ask too.

How long do I need to speak for / write for?

A: The whole speaking assessment will last 4-6 minutes – remember to ask 2 questions. If it is a writing assessment you will have 1 hour to write a minimum of 200 words.

Am I allowed to bring any notes into the exam?

A: Yes. You are allowed up to 30 words and 5 pictures. You are not allowed whole sentences but you can use verb forms. The notes can be in the foreign language or English. These notes must be on the Exam Board paper (see example)

What happens if I am ill on the day of the exam?

A: Get a message to your teacher straightaway. The assessment can then be done but within one week of the date set.

Do the controlled assessments count towards my final grade?

A: Yes! The controlled assessment elements of your GCSE is worth 60% of the overall grade. This is made up of two separate speaking exams and two separate writing assessments, so each is worth 15%. The remainder is made up of 20% reading and 20% listening in the final exams at the end of Year 11.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I get any help with the exam?

A: After the task has been set your teacher is only able to give very general feedback. He/she cannot, for example, correct anything in your preparation or tell you how to say something. You must use the work from class, a dictionary (but carefully) and any reference materials to prepare. You are not allowed to use the Internet to prepare.

Can I prepare for the questions I will get?

A: Yes! You should brainstorm all your information on the topic, imagining the questions that you could be asked. When you prepare, remember to make use of variety of vocabulary and structures. It is important to make sure, for example, you have used the past, present and future tenses.

What are the examiners looking for?

A: They will be looking for: a variety of vocabulary; accuracy; logical, linked ideas; for speaking: good pronunciation; evidence of planning and fluency (meaning not stumbling and slowly delivered). Of course there might be a few pauses while you consider your answers as you have not memorised a script! It is a real conversation and will sound like that too!

Can I speak/write in English at all?

A: No! If you don't know a word or cannot remember a word you need to either think of something else or try and re-word it. You cannot ask the teacher to provide you with a word. If you don't understand a question, you could say so in the foreign language or you could ask for it to be repeated.

Can I ask my teacher anything in the oral exam?

A: Yes. You **MUST** ask at least one but you could ask more than this. It would be a good idea to prepare to ask 3 or 4 questions.

How to Prepare?

You may find it easiest to consider the preparation for this in 5 distinct stages:

- 1)** Read the stimulus carefully. Imagine the conversation / composition, writing down all the possible questions that you think you might be asked or you may need to cover. Write these in the foreign language too for oral assessments – remember that’s how you will hear them.
- 2)** Prepare how to answer the questions you have thought of. Look through your notes and mark any useful work you could use such as written work, reading texts etc. You may find it useful to use a highlighter or Post It notes. This stage may take quite a while. It is not wasted time though.
- 3)** Write your answers, taking the time to check spellings and accuracy. For oral assessments, make sure you use words you know how to pronounce and decide on some questions that you can ask during the conversation too.
- 4)** Practise, practise, practise! For oral assessments record yourself asking each question and practise responding to it without notes. For writing, practise writing the text out in full without notes. Note what is easy to remember and what is harder. In this practice stage, ask someone else to practise with you!
- 5)** Create your notes page . Think about what is going to be most useful to you. I always recommend key words that jog your memory about what the sentence is about. It would be a good idea to do this in pencil in case you make changes.

Tips for Success

1. Start preparing as early as possible! You really cannot prepare thoroughly the night or even few days before.
2. Don't plan it all out in English, word for word. You cannot speak fluently in the foreign language so if you try and simply translate you will soon find it **a)** takes you forever to write your preparation material and **b)** it will be full of mistakes of grammatical structures you do not yet know. Instead, you should use your exercise book, reference materials and a dictionary (but sparingly and carefully).
3. Be realistic. If you find things like this hard aim to prepare enough material to speak for a maximum of 2 minutes or write the minimum of 200 words and keep the language simple. If you are aiming for an A grade though, you will need to make sure you include some 'juicy' language and grammatical structures but you should still not pretend to be a fluent speaker.
4. You may find it useful to record your preparation and listen to it again and again. If you would like to do this, speak to your teacher about how you could do it and make sure you bring a memory stick so you can save it. Then you can easily listen to it again and again (and again and again!)

More tips for success

1. Use past papers and specimen papers from your own but also other exam boards. Search the internet for WJEC, AQA, EDEXCEL, OCR. Find their papers on their websites and print them off. Do them, and find the mark scheme online and mark them. Or get family members or a friend to mark them.
2. Use the transcript. Some exam boards provide the transcripts to go with its papers. Have a look around on their websites. Ashcombe School or the BBC provides the transcripts for its activities and these are free.
3. Read the questions FIRST and use the example. When given a choice of words to put into gaps, cross out the ones you use as you go. Use clues the texts give away – what gender of noun? what's the subject/ending on the verb? Are there any clues of tense?
4. Use the 5mins pre-listening time to underline question words e.g. WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, HOW, HOW MANY...
5. Underline the mark allocations (1), (2), (3) and anticipate what words will come up and write them into the blank spaces on the paper. It's your paper. * the option which looks most likely if you have to guess

LEARN your vocab

1. Make small vocab cards with the English on one side and the foreign language on the other and put these in a shoe box or bag, so that you always have them.
2. Put post-it notes on your mirror and take them off when you've learnt them.
3. Make a vocab tree and hang the words on it once you know them.
4. RACAWAC – Read & Cover & Write & Check! You must learn and forget and learn and forget a word 7 times before it goes in!
5. Get someone at home to test you by saying the English and you spell and pronounce the target language word.
6. You can make cartoons / interesting things to help remember vocab using these websites

www.dvolver.com
www.goanimate.com
www.toondoo.com
www.wordle.com
www.imagechef.com
www.voki.com

Below are a selection of language learning websites you might like to use. They are all free and provide some extra support to your classroom learning. NEVER use ONLINE translators as they do not HELP, nor do they give the right information generally.

The Top 40 Vocab Areas

- Days/months
- Numbers, esp. time
- Abstract rooms at home
- Room contents
- Materials
- Housework tasks
- School subjects
- School equipment
- Meat, veg, fruit, fish!
- Cutlery & crockery
- Snacks, drinks
- Animals and pets
- Weather
- Jobs
- Transport
- Countries / Nationalities
- 20 adjectives for a grade C.
Add 10 for each further grade up.
- Restaurant, café
- Sports
- Body parts
- Family members
- Clothes
- Free time
- Types of films / TV
- Environment
- Things on the street
- Abstract places in town
- Shops
- In the country
- Colours
- Directions
- 30 verbs for a grade C
- Add 10 for each further grade up.

General Websites (all years)

Linguascope (subscription paid by school)

www.linguascope.com

(hinchbk/erasmus) - Intermediate UK German Connection

www.ukgermanconnection.org

Goethe Institute London

www.goethe.de/london

German Embassy

www.london.diplo.de

Hello Mylo (all languages)

www.hellomylo.com

Languages Online (all languages)

www.languagesonline.org.uk

BBC (all languages)

www.bbc.co.uk/languages

BBC Class clips (all languages)

www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/>

Deutsch Welle - German News

www.dw-world.de

Leo (On-line Dictionary)

www.leo.org

Word Reference (On-line

Dictionary)

www.wordreference.com

NGFL Cymru (all languages)

www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk

MFL Sunderland School

[www.sunderlandschools.org/mfl-](http://www.sunderlandschools.org/mfl-sunderland)

[sunderland](http://www.sunderlandschools.org/mfl-sunderland)

Digital Dialects

www.digitaldialects.com

On-line German Pronunciation

<http://userweb.port.ac.uk/~joyce1/abinitio/>

Politics and Europe can be fun!

<http://www.kinder.diplo.de>

Childrens Zone – lots of links

www.kindernetz.de

Olis Wilde Welt (Animal Dictionary)

<http://www.kindernetz.de/oli/tierlexikon/index.php>

ZDF TV for kids

<http://www.tivi.de/fernsehen/logo/start/index.html>

Learn with the mouse

www.hanisauland.de

You can search for German things using

www.blinde-kuh.de

You can learn French

www.monjtodayien.com

www.frenchinaclick.com

www.tv5.org/TV5Site/enseigner-apprendre-francais/accueil_apprendre.php

www.france24.com/fr

www.lsfrench.com/beginners2.html

www.zut.org.uk/index.html

French songs and vocabulary

<http://platea.pntic.mec.es/~cvera/hotpot/chansons/index.htm>

<http://www.lepointdufle.net>

You can learn Spanish

www.childtopia.com

www.chicomania.com

RTVE is a Spanish TV channel and this links to the children's section.

www.rtve.es/infantil

You can print your very own posters and vocab cards in French and Spanish

www.sparklebox.co.uk

Brainstorming possible questions to ask in speaking and writing assessments

Use this page to write down 3-4 questions that you could ask as part of this conversation / composition.

(what)
(which)
(who)
(with whom)
(where)
(why)
(when)
(since when)
(how often)

Candidate Name: Teaching group: Date:

Candidate Number: Language: Centre Number:

Task type (Please tick) (Please insert title of stimulus)

Picture-based discussion

Presentation and follow-up questions

Open interaction

You can produce up to 30 words of notes in the box on the right.
 Notes should appear in bullet point format or as a spider diagram
 and full words must be used (Codes are not acceptable). You may also
 produce up to five small drawings in the box below.

Candidate Name Language assessed Task

Content & Response (18)	Range of language (6)	Accuracy (6)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates comprehensive and detailed information related to chosen visual/topic/stimulus. Interacts very well. Speaks very confidently and with spontaneity. Frequently takes initiative and develops elaborate responses. No difficulty in expressing and explaining a range of ideas and points of view. Very little or no hesitation. Able to deal with unpredictable elements without difficulty. Communicates detailed and relevant information related to chosen visual/topic/stimulus. Interacts well. Speaks confidently. Takes initiative and develops more elaborate responses. Has little difficulty expressing and explaining ideas and points of view. Little hesitation and little or no prompting necessary. Able to deal with unpredictable elements with some success. Communicates relevant information related to the chosen visual/topic/stimulus but with some obvious omissions. Some interaction. Able to participate in familiar, straightforward discussion and conversation, but experiences problems with more complex question forms. Conveys opinions, but rarely expands. Some hesitation. Able to deal with some unpredictable elements. Limited communication related to chosen visual/topic/stimulus. Some coherence in unambiguous presentation of simple information and opinions, but responses very limited. Very hesitant and reliant on teacher-examiner prompting. Able to deal with isolated unpredictable elements. Minimal description of chosen visual/topic/stimulus. Conveys very little relevant information in minimal responses (mainly one word replies). Largely disjointed and unconnected ideas. Very limited comprehension of basic questions. Wholly reliant on teacher-examiner prompting. No rewardable language. 	<p>16-17-18</p> <p>12-13-14-15</p> <p>8-9-10-11</p> <p>4-5-6-7</p> <p>1-2-3</p> <p>0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses wide range of appropriate vocabulary and structures, including some complex lexical items. Consistently competent use of different tenses. Good variety of appropriate vocabulary and structures. Unambiguous use of different verb tenses. Generally at ease with subordination. Adequate but predictable range of vocabulary and structures. May include different tenses or time frames, perhaps with some ambiguity. Some examples of subordination. Limited and/or repetitive range of vocabulary or structures. Predominantly uses short sentences. Very limited range of basic structures. Frequently resorts to non-target language. Rarely offers complete sentences. No rewardable language. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very accurate, with only isolated and usually insignificant errors. Consistently good pronunciation and intonation. Some errors, especially in more complex structures, but generally accurate. Pronunciation and intonation generally good. A fair number of errors made, including some basic, but communication overall unaffected. Pronunciation and intonation generally accurate. Many basic errors, but main points communicated. Simple 'pre-learned' stereotypes correct. Pronunciation generally understandable. Consistently inaccurate language and pronunciation frequently impedes basic communication. Only isolated examples of accurate language. No rewardable language. <p>6</p> <p>5</p> <p>3-4</p> <p>2</p> <p>1</p> <p>0</p>

Please circle the mark achieved in each of the three columns above and insert total mark in the total box.

Total

Please note that this Record Sheet does not replace the 'Controlled Assessment Authenticity Record Sheet – Speaking', which must be submitted with recordings for moderation

GCSE Writing Markscheme

Communication and content	Mark
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very detailed and fully relevant response to the stimulus. Shows a clear ability to narrate, describe, express opinions and expand, as appropriate to the task. Communicates with no ambiguity. Excellent linking of the piece into a whole. Coherent and pleasant to read. 	13-15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed response to the stimulus but there may be minor omissions. Provides evidence of description, opinion and expansion, as appropriate to the task. Generally communicates clearly, with some lapses. Reasonable attempt to link the piece into a whole. Generally coherent. Pedestrian or alternatively somewhat over ambitious. 	10-12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of the task is completed and relevant information is conveyed, although there may be some omissions and/or irrelevances. Provides evidence of an ability to go beyond a minimal response. Begins to expand ideas and express opinions, as appropriate to the task. Comprehensible overall with some lapses, sometimes leading to ambiguity, especially if more ambitious language is attempted. Some attempt at linking piece into a whole. 	7-9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant key information is given but there may be major omissions, irrelevance and/or repetition. The level of response is minimal There is no evidence of description or opinions (other than simple likes/dislikes). Some ambiguity. Just about comprehensible overall. Sentences mostly written in isolation. Not easy to read. 	4-6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little relevant information is conveyed. Much ambiguity and omission. The level of response is very limited. Substantial degree of irrelevance and incoherence. Except for isolated items, would not be comprehensible to a native speaker. 	1-3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant communication worthy of credit. A mark of zero for communication and content will mean a mark of zero for knowledge and application of language and for accuracy 	0

Knowledge and application of language	Mark
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wide range of vocabulary and structures, fully appropriate to the task and used effectively. Little or no repetition. Confident use of more complex structures, such as object pronouns, negatives, superlatives and range of tenses, with very few lapses. Clear ability to manipulate language and to produce longer, fluent sentences with ease. 	9-10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quite a wide range of vocabulary and structures appropriate to describe and to express and justify opinions. Some attempt to use ambitious structures (subordinate clauses, object pronouns, tenses, etc) with a fair measure of success. Tenses are generally used correctly. Some ability to manipulate language although not always successful. 	7-8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary and structures are generally appropriate to the task. Correct syntax when using simple, short sentences. Some longer sentences where syntax is not always correct. Attempts enhancement of fact with adjectives and adverbial phrases with some success. Some evidence of correct use of a range of tenses, with some lapses. Attempts to use subordinate clauses/simple linking with some success. 	5-6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited vocabulary and structures, often repetitive and stereotyped. Language is basic and sometimes inappropriate to the task. Pre-learnt, set phrases predominate but there are some short simple sentences, which are more or less correct. Some attempts at tenses, but many mistakes. Some attempt to use adjectives. There may be some simple subordination. 	3-4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very limited vocabulary, with occasional correct words. Very little understanding of language structures. There may be the occasional correct phrase or short sentence pre-learnt or 'lifted'. 	1-2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No language worthy of credit. 	0

Accuracy	Mark
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High level of accuracy, though not necessarily faultless. Spellings, genders, agreements, verb forms mastered with the odd slip. Secure when using more complex language with only a few minor errors. 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally accurate language. Most verb forms correct, secure in genders and agreements but the odd lapse. Spellings mostly accurate. When more complex structures are attempted, accuracy can be more variable. 	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fairly accurate in straightforward language, but some lapses with more complex language. Inconsistency in verb forms but more correct than incorrect. Spelling of common words generally accurate. The work is clearly more accurate than inaccurate. Language errors do not significantly hinder communication. Inaccuracy increases if more complex structures are attempted 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many basic errors which often impede communication. Some correct phrases but frequent misspellings, inaccurate genders and incorrect verb forms. 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequent basic errors and inaccuracies prevent communication. Isolated examples of correct language. Spellings and genders very weak. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little or no evidence of correct verb formation. No language worthy of credit. 	0