

GCSE languages

The accredited specification



Structure of new specification

- Linear – all exams at the end of the course
- Four papers, each covering one skill:
 - Listening
 - Speaking
 - Reading
 - Writing
- All set and marked by AQA
- 25% equal weighting for each skill
- Tiered papers in all four skills
- But students must sit either Foundation Tier or Higher Tier in all four skills – no mixing and matching as in current specification
- New grading system – 1-9 (with 9 being highest grade available)



Structure of assessment

Paper 1: Listening (25%)

Paper 2: Speaking (25%)

Paper 3: Reading (25%)

Paper 4: Writing (25%)



Compulsory themes from subject content

- Identity and culture
- Local, national, international and global areas of interest
- Current and future study and employment



Identity and culture

- **Me, my family and friends**
 - relationships with family and friends
 - marriage/partnerships
- **Technology in everyday life**
 - social media
 - mobile technology
- **Free time activities**
 - music
 - cinema and TV
 - food and eating out
 - sport
- **Customs and festivals in target language-speaking countries/communities**



Local, national, international and global areas of interest

- **Home, town, neighbourhood and region**
- **Social issues**
 - charity/voluntary work
 - healthy/unhealthy living
- **Global issues**
 - the environment
 - poverty/homelessness
- **Travel and tourism**



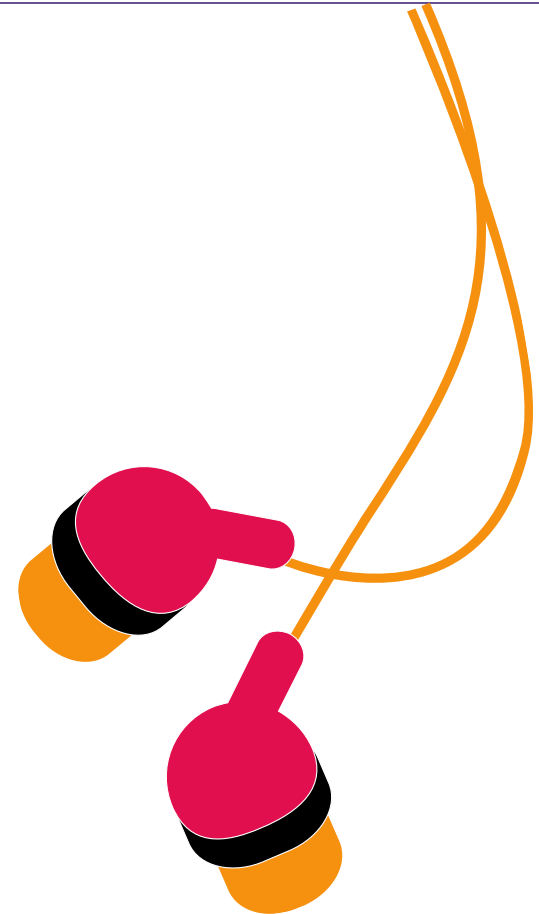
Current and future study and employment

- **My studies**
- **Life at school/college**
- **Education post-16**
- **Jobs, career choices and ambitions**



Paper 1: Listening

- Length of exams:
 - 35 minutes at Foundation Tier
 - 45 minutes at Higher Tier
 - includes five minutes' reading time at start of exam for each paper
- Pauses built into recording
- 40 marks at Foundation Tier
- 50 marks at Higher Tier
- 25% of the total GCSE marks
- Tasks ensure sufficient progression from Key Stage 3
- Contexts for the questions ensure authenticity
- Wide variety of different types of spoken language
- Detailed mark schemes



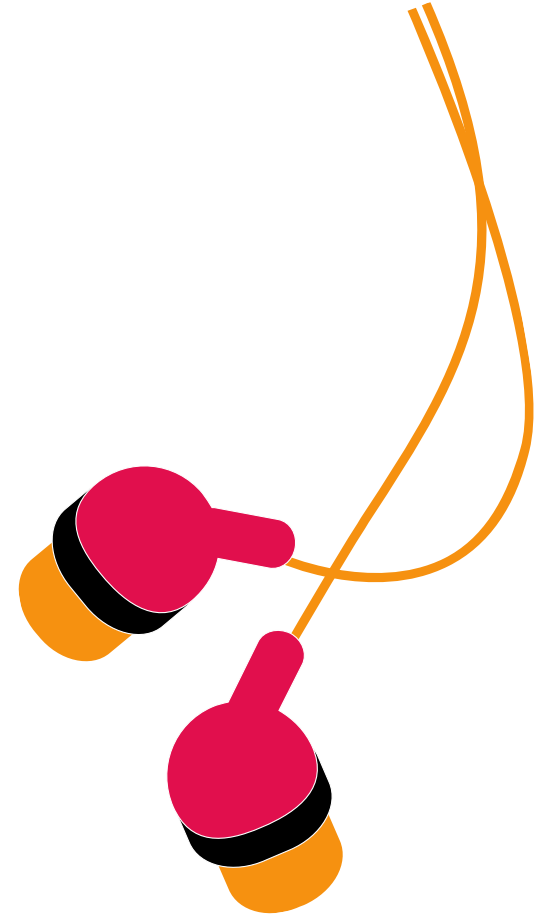
Paper 1: Listening

20% of the questions and answers are in the target language (to meet the new regulatory requirement for 20-30% of questions and answers to be in the target language)

Format of question papers (Foundation and Higher Tier)

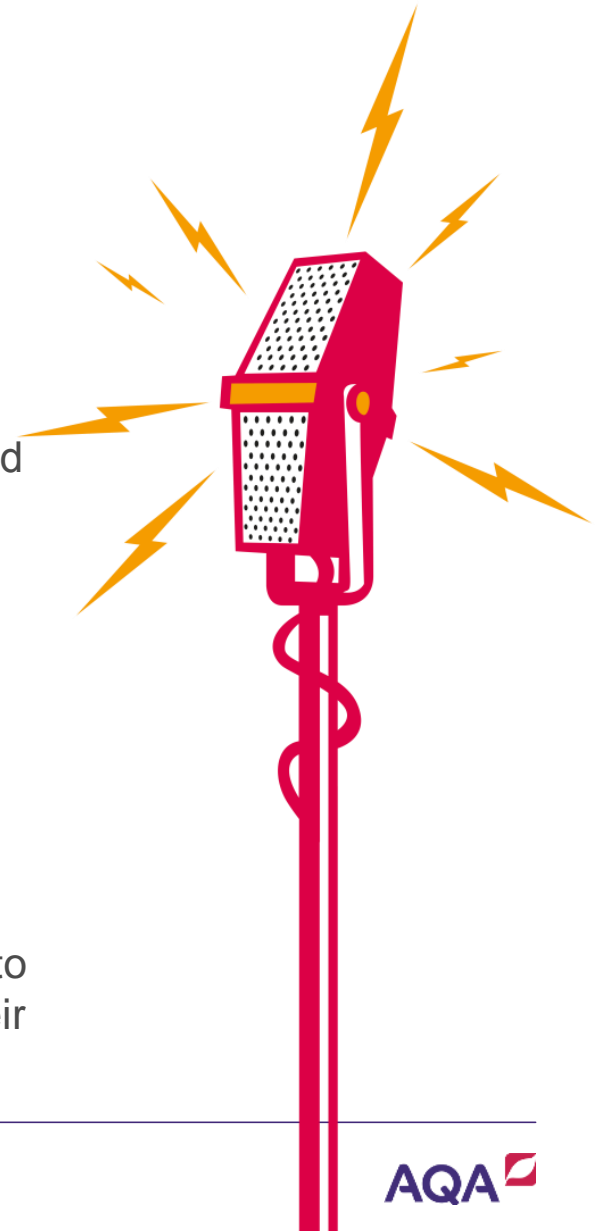
- **Section A** – questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally (Foundation Tier 32 marks, Higher Tier 40 marks)
- **Section B** – questions in the target language, to be answered in the target language or non-verbally (Foundation Tier 8 marks, Higher Tier 10 marks)

Written target language answers will be marked for communication only, not quality of language.



Paper 2: Speaking

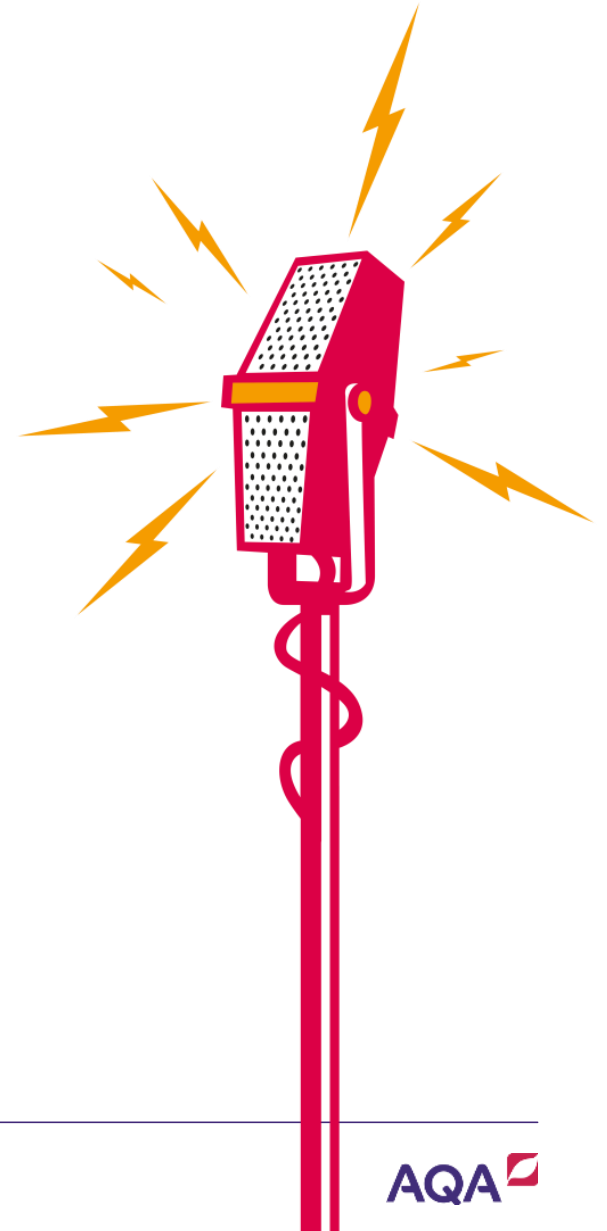
- Tests conducted and recorded by the teacher within a specified five week period in April-May which is published on the AQA exam timetable each year
- All tests set and marked by AQA examiners
- **Foundation Test:** 7-9 minutes and 12 minutes' supervised preparation time
- **Higher Test:** 10-12 minutes and 12 minutes' supervised preparation time
- 25% of the total GCSE marks
- Teachers will have access to the confidential material up to three working days in advance of the test period to do their preparation



Paper 2: Speaking

Test will consist of three parts:

- Part 1 - role-play - two mins (15 marks)
- Part 2 - discussion of photo card - two mins at Foundation Tier and three mins at Higher Tier (15 marks)
- Part 3 - general conversation – 3-5 mins at Foundation Tier and 5-7 mins at Higher Tier (30 marks)
- Total marks = 60



Paper 2: Speaking

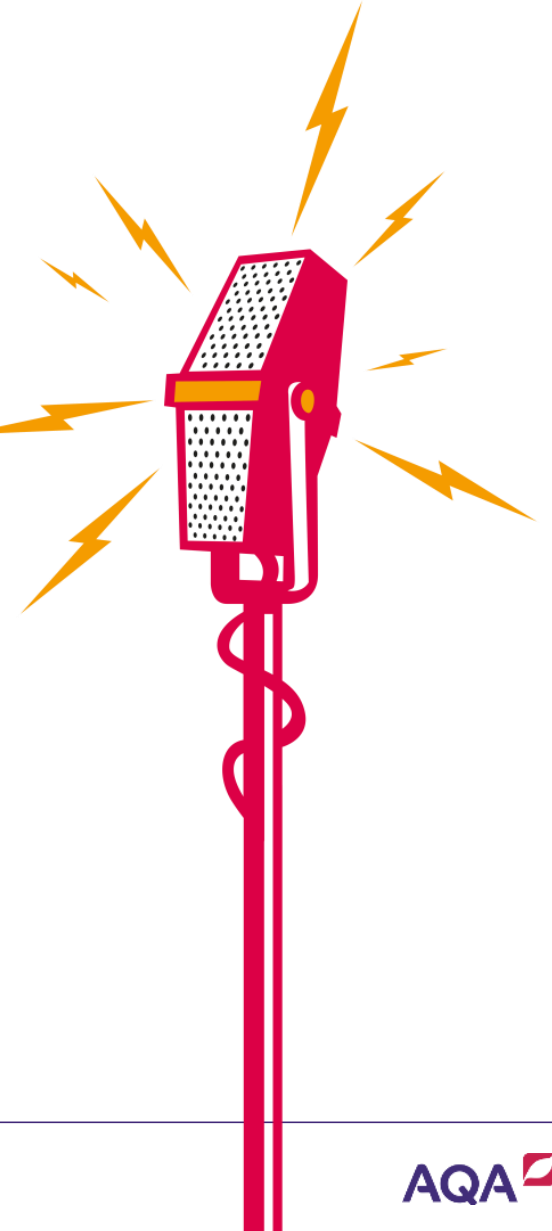
Allocation of marks across the speaking test

	Communication	Knowledge and use of language	Range and accuracy of language	Pron and intonation	Spontaneity and fluency	Total
Role-play	10	5				15
Photo card	15					15
Gen Conv	10		10	5	5	30
Total	35	5	10	5	5	60

Paper 2: Speaking

Part 1 - role-play

- Six role-plays will be set at each Tier in every series – one card per student (no choice of card)
- Instructions to students are in English. Scene setting and tasks are in the target language at both tiers
- Each role-play has five tasks which include an unpredictable task and a task where the student is required to ask a question
- Students prepare their responses in the preparation time and can use these notes during the test
- The role-play will take approx two minutes at each Tier
- Teacher role is scripted at both Tiers
- AQA specifies sequence of role-plays (in Teacher's Booklet)
- Assessed for communication and use of language
- Mix of formal and informal role-play scenarios requiring the appropriate form of address
- Exemplification of application of marking criteria is included in the mark scheme



Paper 2: Speaking

Role-plays

Instructions to candidates

- Your teacher will play the part of your Polish friend and will speak first.
- You should address your friend as *ty*.
- When you see this – ! – you will have to respond to something you have not prepared.
- When you see this – ? – you will have to ask a question.

Paper 2: Speaking

Foundation tier – candidate role

Jesteś w polskiej kawiarni z kolegą/koleżanką. Rozmawiasz z kelnerem/kelnerką

- Stolik – gdzie.
- Kanapki – **dwa** rodzaje.
-
- Napój.
- !
- ? Cena.

Paper 2: Speaking

Foundation tier – teacher's role

- You begin the role-play.
- You should address the candidate as *ty*.
- You may change the target language phrases given below **only** if the candidate's response makes them inappropriate.
- Remember that if you supply key vocabulary, candidates cannot be rewarded for it.

Paper 2: Speaking

Higher tier – candidate role

Rozmawiasz o swoich planach na wakacje z pracownikiem/pracowniczką w biurze turystycznym w Polsce.

- Wycieczka – dokąd i na jak długo.
- !
- Przejazd – transport i dlaczego.
- ? Nocleg.
- Zajęcia – podaj **dwa** przykłady

Paper 2: Speaking

Role-play – Assessment criteria

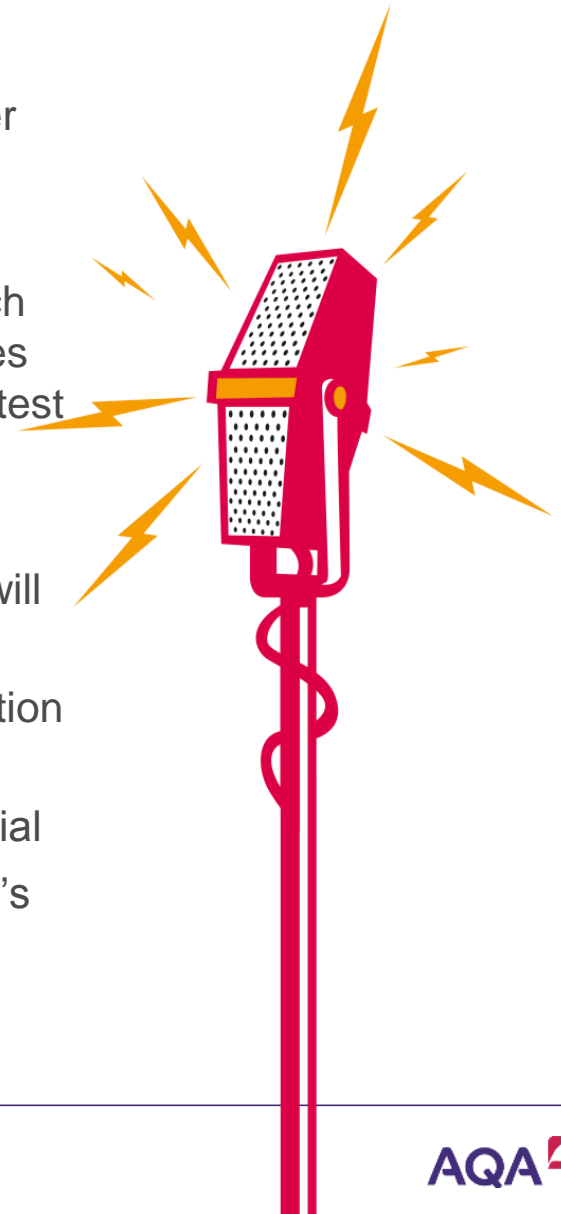
Mark	Communication
2	The message is conveyed without ambiguity.
1	The message is partially conveyed or conveyed with some ambiguity.
0	No part of the message is conveyed.

Mark	Knowledge and use of language
5	Very good knowledge and use of language.
4	Good knowledge and use of language.
3	Reasonable knowledge and use of language.
2	Limited knowledge and use of language.
1	Poor knowledge and use of language.
0	No language produced is worthy of credit.

Paper 2: Speaking

Part 2 – discussion of photo card

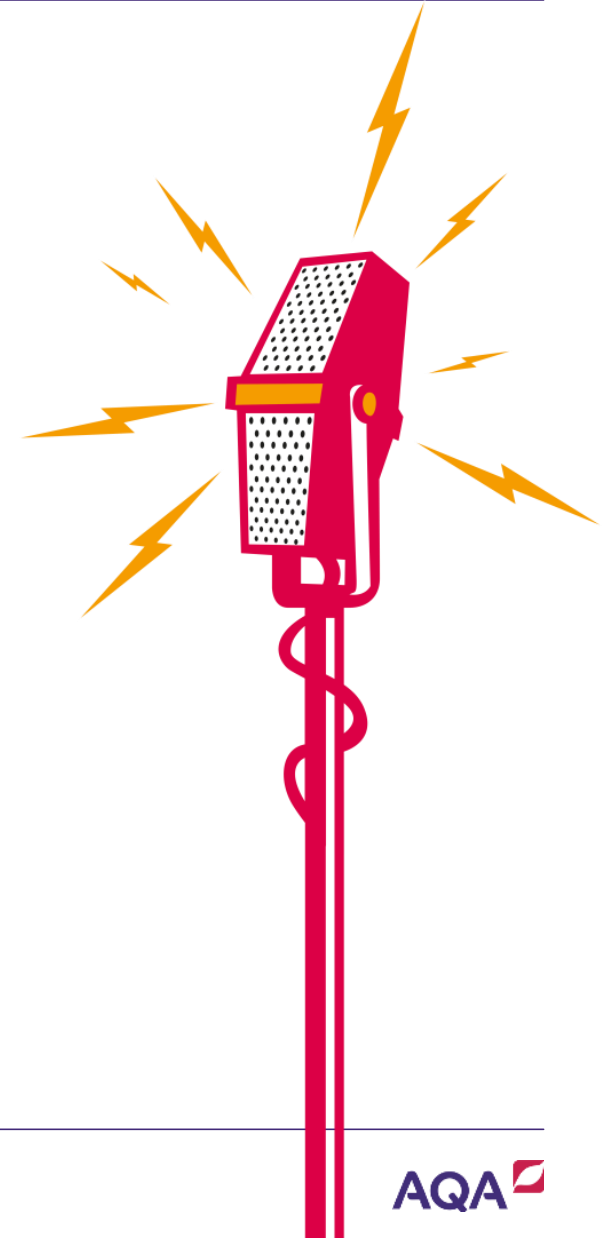
- Six photo cards will be set in each series – one card per student (no choice of card)
- Photos are the same at Foundation and Higher Tiers
- Student's card contains three of the five questions which will be asked so the student can prepare their responses during the preparation time and use these notes in the test
- First question always the same – what is there in the photo?
- At Foundation tier, one question on the student's card will be in a tense other than the present
- The discussion will take approx two minutes at Foundation Tier and three minutes at Higher Tier
- Teacher asks questions as provided in Teacher's material
- AQA will specify sequence of photo cards (in Teacher's booklet)
- Assessed for Communication only



Paper 2: Speaking

Part 3 – General Conversation

- The conversation is based on the two Themes not covered in the photo card
- Student will nominate first Theme for discussion but will not know the questions which will be asked
- Suggested questions covering full ability range provided for each Theme in the Teacher's Booklet – not compulsory
- Students are required to ask a question during this part of the test and this can be at any point. **NB:** There is a 1 mark penalty if a student fails to ask a question
- Assessed for:
 - Communication – 10 marks
 - Range and accuracy of language - 10 marks
 - Pronunciation and intonation – 5 marks
 - Spontaneity and fluency – 5 marks



Paper 2: Speaking

Sequencing table for Speaking tests

Candidate Order	Role-play	Candidate's Chosen Conversation Theme	Photo card	Candidate's Second Conversation Theme
1	5	Theme 1	H (Theme 2)	Theme 3
		Theme 2	I (Theme 3)	Theme 1
		Theme 3	B (Theme 1)	Theme 2
2	9	Theme 1	F (Theme 3)	Theme 2
		Theme 2	A (Theme 1)	Theme 3
		Theme 3	D (Theme 2)	Theme 1

Paper 3: Reading

- Length of exams
 - 45 minutes at Foundation Tier
 - 1 hour at Higher Tier
- 60 marks (for each of Foundation and Higher)
- 25% of the total GCSE marks
- Tasks ensure sufficient progression from Key Stage 3
- Contexts and format of the tasks ensure authenticity
- Detailed mark schemes



Paper 3: Reading

- 30% of questions and answers at each Tier in the target language (to meet regulatory requirement for 30-40% of questions and answers to be in the target language)
- Translation from target language into English (to meet regulatory requirement - minimum 35 words at Foundation Tier and 50 words at Higher Tier)
- Each paper contains literary extracts – adapted and abridged as appropriate (to meet new regulatory requirement for the inclusion of literary texts as a stimulus). Mixture of contemporary and historical sources will be used.



Paper 3: Reading

Format of question papers (Foundation and Higher Tier)

- **Section A** – questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally (33 marks at each Tier)
- **Section B** – questions in the target language, to be answered in the target language or non-verbally (18 marks at each Tier)
- **Section C** – translation of a short passage from the target language into English (9 marks at each Tier)

Written target language answers will be marked for communication only, not quality of language.



Paper 3: Reading translation mark scheme

Qu		Key idea	Accept	Reject	Mark
12	Byliśmy w Hiszpanii	We were in Spain	Whilst in Spain	We was	1
	na wakacjach z córką.	on holiday with (our) daughter.	on our holidays		1
	Akurat siedzieliśmy razem przy obiedzie.	We were sitting together at lunch.	(we were) sat/sitting at lunch/we were having our lunch together.		1
	W barze był włączony telewizor	The TV was on (in the bar)	The TV was switched on		1
	Kiedy drużyna męża strzeliła gola,	When (my) husband's team scored		wrong tense	1
	podskoczył razem ze stołem	(my husband) jumped up, taking the table with him	sending the table flying etc		1
	i potłukł talerze!	and broke/smashed the plates.		wrong tense	1
	Od tamtej pory nie wolno mu	Since then he is not allowed	From that time	wrong tense	1
	oglądać telewizji w barze.	To watch TV in the bar			1

Paper 4: Writing

- Length of exams
 - 1 hour at Foundation Tier
 - 1 hour 15 minutes at Higher Tier
- 50 marks at Foundation Tier
- 60 marks at Higher Tier
- 25% of the total GCSE marks
- Overlap question (Foundation Q4 and Higher Q1)

New requirement for translation from English into Polish at both tiers (minimum 35 words at Foundation and 50 words at Higher)

Tasks at both tiers are set in Polish (except for the translations)



Paper 4: Writing

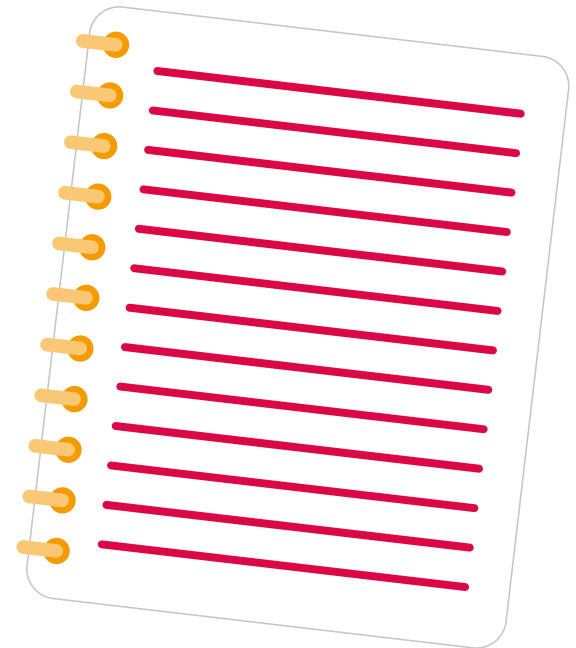
Allocation of marks across the Foundation Tier Writing test

	Communi- cation	Content	Qual of lang	Conveying key messages	App of grammatical knowledge of language and structures	Total
Q1	8					8
Q2		10	6			16
Q3				5	5	10
Q4		10	6			16
Total	8	20	12	5	5	50

Paper 4: Writing

Structure of Foundation Tier question paper

- **Question 1** – student produces four short sentences in response to a stimulus photo (8 marks)
- **Question 2** – student produces a short text of approx. 40 words in response to four compulsory short bullet points (16 marks)
- **Question 3** – Translation from English (sentences) into Polish (35-40 words) – (10 marks)
- **Question 4** – Structured writing task (student responds to four compulsory bullet points, producing approx. 90 words in total) – there will be a choice from two questions – (16 marks)



Paper 4: Writing

Foundation tier Question 1

Wysyłasz zdjęcie przez WhatsApp do swojego krewnego w Polsce.



Opisz to zdjęcie. Napisz **cztery** zdania po **polsku**.

Paper 4: Writing

Foundation tier Question 2

Jesteś na wakacjach i piszesz-email do przyjaciół.

Napisz:

- gdzie jesteś
- z kim spędzasz czas
- co robisz
- kiedy wracasz.

Napisz około 40 słów po **polsku**.

Paper 4: Writing

Foundation tier Question 4/Higher tier Question 1

Piszesz blog i postanowiłeś/łaś dziś opisać swoją szkołę.

Opisz :

- jak ubierasz się do szkoły
- zalety i wady Twojej szkoły
- nauczyciela/kę, który/a pomógł/ła Ci w przeszłości
- co chcesz studiować po egzaminach i co myślisz na temat studiów.

Napisz blog po **polsku** na około 90 słów.

Paper 4: Writing

Structure of Higher Tier question paper

- **Question 1** – Structured writing task (student responds to four compulsory bullet points, producing approx. 90 words in total) – there will be a choice from two questions – (16 marks)
- **Question 2** – Open-ended writing task (student responds to two open-ended compulsory bullet points, producing approx. 150 words in total) – there will be a choice from two questions – (32 marks)
- **Question 3** – Translation from English (short passage) into Polish (50-55 words) – (12 marks)



Paper 4: Writing

Allocation of marks across the Higher Tier Writing test

	Content	Q uality of lang	Range of lang	Acc	Conveying key messages	App of grammatical knowledge of language and structures	Total
Q1	10	6					16
Q 2	15		12	5			32
Q 3					6	6	12
Total	25	6	12	5	6	6	60

Paper 4: Writing

Higher tier Question 2

Napisz artykuł o roli technologii do polskiego magazynu dla młodzieży.

Opisz:

- rolę technologii w życiu współczesnego człowieka
- sytuację, kiedy technologia bardzo Ci pomogła.

Napisz artykuł po **polsku** na około 150 słów. W wypracowaniu rozwiń powyższe dwa punkty.

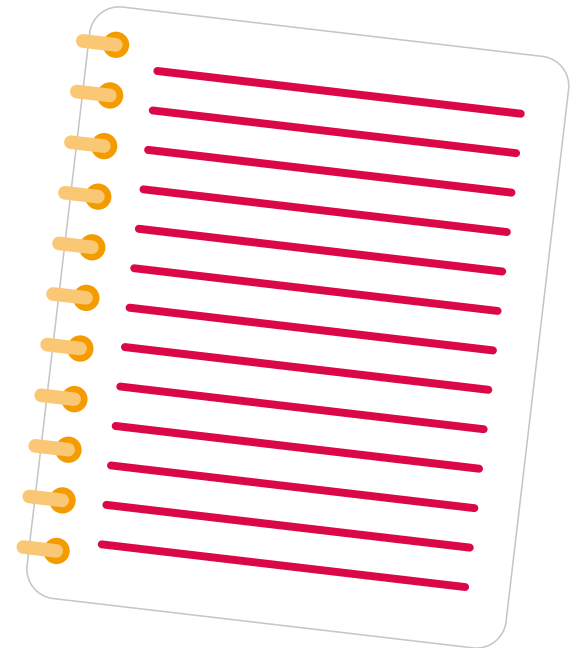
Paper 4: Writing

Marking of translations into Polish

The translation is assessed for:

- conveying key messages (5 marks at Foundation tier and 6 marks at Higher tier)
and
- application of grammatical knowledge of language and structures (5 marks at Foundation tier and 6 marks at Higher tier).

When awarding marks, the student's response across all five sentences/whole passage should be considered. Mark scheme contains detailed exemplification of marking criteria.



Paper 4: Writing

Translation (Foundation): Assessment criteria

Level	Marks	Response
5	5	All key messages are conveyed.
4	4	Nearly all key messages are conveyed.
3	3	Most key messages are conveyed.
2	2	Some key messages are conveyed.
1	1	Few key messages are conveyed.
0	0	No key messages are conveyed.

Level	Marks	Response
5	5	Very good knowledge of vocabulary and structures; highly accurate.
4	4	Good knowledge of vocabulary and structures; generally accurate.
3	3	Reasonable knowledge of vocabulary and structures; more accurate than inaccurate.
2	2	Limited knowledge of vocabulary and structures; generally inaccurate.
1	1	Very limited knowledge of vocabulary and structures; highly inaccurate.
0	0	The language produced does not meet the standard required for Level 1 at this tier.

Grammar

Grammar

- Is drawn from existing lists in the current GCSE subject criteria.
- Includes an indication of structures that students will be expected to recognise only and not produce independently.

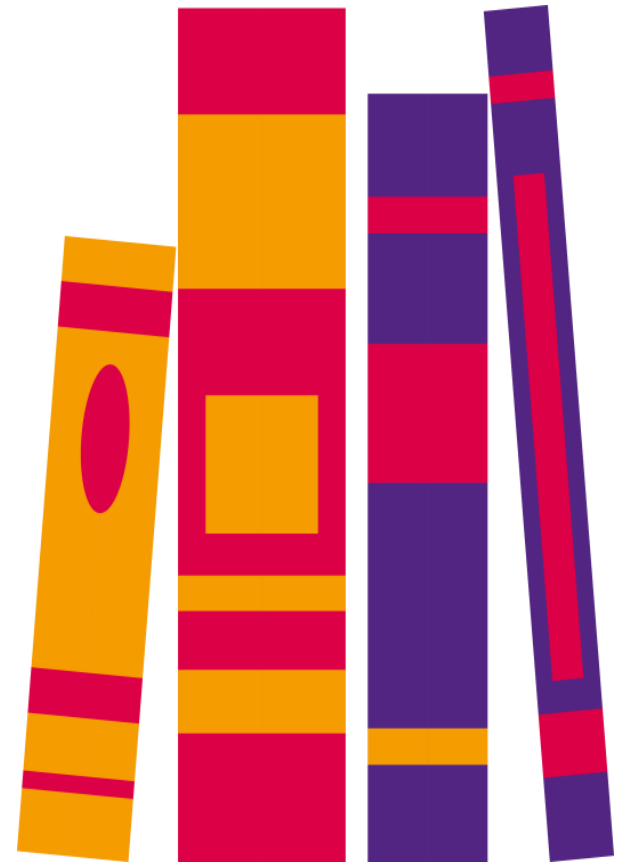
Dictionaries

- Students are not allowed to have access to a dictionary when taking any assessment or during any period of formal preparation time prior to such an assessment



Vocabulary lists

- Foundation and Higher lists in the specification (with English translations).
- Ofqual requirements state that:
 - assessments must not be restricted to use of words and/or forms of words on the vocabulary lists in such a way as to make the assessments predictable
 - Foundation Tier assessments must require students to understand and respond to common or familiar words and/or forms of words that are not on the vocabulary lists
 - Higher Tier assessments must require students to understand and respond to words and/or forms of words that are not on the vocabulary lists and which are less common or familiar than those used in relation to Foundation Tier assessments.



Vocabulary lists

What does this mean in practice?

This means that there will be words which are tested at both Tiers which are not on the vocabulary list.

At Foundation Tier, this could be words which students know from their prior study or words which are near cognates or which can be accessed through the communication strategies in the specifications.

At Higher Tier, we will be testing words which are less common or familiar than those tested at Foundation Tier. Again, students will be expected to use the knowledge from their prior study and communication strategies in the specification to access these words.



Resources and support

- Specifications will be accompanied by a full set of specimen assessment materials
- FAQs available now
- 2-year scheme of work
- Marked student work with commentaries for all skills
- Online webcast for Conduct of the speaking tests available in April 2017 free of charge and on demand
- Online GCSE Polish launch and preparing to teach webcast available early in the summer term, available free of charge and on demand via website



Help and support

We're here in the Languages team to support you throughout the specification changes and beyond.

If you have any questions, contact our dedicated team.

- Visit: [aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/gcse](https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/gcse)
- Email: mfl@aca.org.uk
- Call: **01423 534381**

