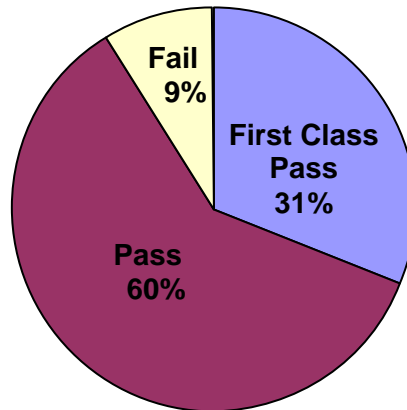


8985 International Spoken ESOL - Access

General observations

Overall performance has improved slightly from last year, with fewer Fails and a higher proportion of First Class Passes. The Pass/Fail rate overall is the same as for the Preliminary level. The good percentage of First Class Passes shows that good candidates make the most of the opportunities given to show the best of their abilities and go beyond the minimum requirements.

A2



Areas of good performance

Candidates are generally confident and are able to ask the interlocutor for repetition if they don't understand. They generally perform well in Part 1, giving appropriate responses to the interlocutor's questions. Many are able in Part 3 to develop the interaction well and begin to take the initiative without always waiting to be prompted by the interlocutor.

Areas for development

In Parts 1 and 2, weaker candidates only produce one-word answers and very brief responses. There is some lack of fluency. In Part 4, candidates are not always familiar with the various topics which are provided in the syllabus and which will be the target of the various parts of the examination. They are not always able to sustain a long turn.

Recommendations

Candidates need practice in giving a long turn and talking unprompted for about a minute. In addition to accuracy, attention needs to be given to fluency so that candidates can sustain the interaction over a number of exchanges and avoid lengthy pauses and hesitation fillers (ums and ers). Practising mock examinations will help them to improve performance, especially for Parts 2 and 4.

Tips

- Practise talking for about a minute on a different topic (from the list in the syllabus) each lesson.
- While it's natural to pause for thought, try not to worry about getting every single word absolutely perfect. Lengthy delays hunting for the right form slows conversation down – it's important to maintain the flow.
- Listen to different voices (on radio, TV, DVD, songs) to get used to hearing different ways of speaking.

Additional comments

Interlocutors can help to provide a fair reflection of candidates' performance by preparing for the examination carefully and keeping to the use of language appropriate to this level. They should use the full range of questions provided in the paper, rather than keeping to a restricted set. They need to keep to the set timings for the different elements, not allowing candidates to overrun nor cutting them off too quickly. Part 2 needs planning, with ideas ready which will maximise the potential of the situations but, in B, will be flexible enough to respond spontaneously to the candidate's initiation.