



# Syllabus

## Cambridge O Level French 3015

For examination in June 2021.

Français

### Changes to the syllabus for 2021

The latest syllabus is version 1, published September 2018.

There are no significant changes which affect teaching.

**You are strongly advised to read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.**

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# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 Why choose Cambridge International?

Cambridge Assessment International Education prepares school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. We are part of the University of Cambridge.

Our Cambridge Pathway gives students a clear path for educational success from age 5 to 19. Schools can shape the curriculum around how they want students to learn – with a wide range of subjects and flexible ways to offer them. It helps students discover new abilities and a wider world, and gives them the skills they need for life, so they can achieve at school, university and work.

Our programmes and qualifications set the global standard for international education. They are created by subject experts, rooted in academic rigour and reflect the latest educational research. They provide a strong platform for students to progress from one stage to the next, and are well supported by teaching and learning resources.

Every year, nearly a million Cambridge learners from 10 000 schools in 160 countries prepare for their future with the Cambridge Pathway.

### Cambridge learners

Our mission is to provide educational benefit through provision of international programmes and qualifications for school education and to be the world leader in this field. Together with schools, we develop Cambridge learners who are:

- **confident** in working with information and ideas – their own and those of others
- **responsible** for themselves, responsive to and respectful of others
- **reflective** as learners, developing their ability to learn
- **innovative** and equipped for new and future challenges
- **engaged** intellectually and socially, ready to make a difference.

### Recognition

Our expertise in curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment is the basis for the recognition of our programmes and qualifications around the world.

Cambridge O Level is internationally recognised by schools, universities and employers as equivalent in demand to Cambridge IGCSE™ (International General Certificate of Secondary Education). There are over 700 000 entries a year in nearly 70 countries. Learn more at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition)

### Support for teachers

A wide range of materials and resources is available to support teachers and learners in Cambridge schools. Resources suit a variety of teaching methods in different international contexts. Through subject discussion forums and training, teachers can access the expert advice they need for teaching our qualifications. More details can be found in Section 2 of this syllabus and at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/teachers](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/teachers)

## Support for exams officers

Exams officers can trust in reliable, efficient administration of exams entries and excellent personal support from our customer services. Learn more at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers)

## Quality management

Cambridge International is committed to providing exceptional quality. In line with this commitment, our quality management system for the provision of international qualifications and education programmes for students aged 5 to 19 is independently certified as meeting the internationally recognised standard, ISO 9001:2015. Learn more at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/ISO9001](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/ISO9001)

## 1.2 Why choose Cambridge O Level?

Cambridge O Level is typically for 14 to 16 year olds and is an internationally recognised qualification. It has been designed especially for an international market and is sensitive to the needs of different countries. Cambridge O Level is designed for learners whose first language may not be English, and this is acknowledged throughout the examination process.

Our aim is to balance knowledge, understanding and skills in our programmes and qualifications to enable students to become effective learners and to provide a solid foundation for their continuing educational journey.

Through our professional development courses and our support materials for Cambridge O Levels, we provide the tools to enable teachers to prepare students to the best of their ability and work with us in the pursuit of excellence in education.

Cambridge O Levels are considered to be an excellent preparation for Cambridge International AS & A Levels, the Cambridge AICE (Advanced International Certificate of Education) Diploma, Cambridge International Pre-U, and other education programmes, such as the US Advanced Placement program and the International Baccalaureate Diploma programme. Learn more about Cambridge O Levels at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/olevel](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/olevel)

## Guided learning hours

Cambridge O Level syllabuses are designed on the assumption that learners have about 130 guided learning hours per subject over the duration of the course, but this is for guidance only. The number of hours required to gain the qualification may vary according to local curricular practice and the students' prior experience of the subject.

## 1.3 Why choose Cambridge O Level French?

Cambridge O Level language qualifications are accepted by universities and employers as proof of linguistic ability and understanding. The course encourages learners to develop lifelong skills, including:

- the ability to use a foreign language as a means of practical communication
- insight into the culture and civilisation of countries where the language is spoken
- a positive attitude towards language learning, towards the speakers of other languages, and towards other cultures and civilisations
- techniques which can be applied to other areas of learning, such as analysis and memory skills
- a sound foundation for progression to employment or further study.

### Prior learning

We recommend that learners who are beginning this course should have previously achieved a level corresponding to the requirements of the Key Stage 3 programme of study for Modern Foreign Languages within the National Curriculum for England.

### Progression

Cambridge O Levels are general qualifications that enable learners to progress directly to employment, or to proceed to further qualifications in another subject area or at a higher level, requiring more specific knowledge, understanding and skills.

Candidates who are awarded grades A\* to C in Cambridge O Level French are well prepared to follow courses leading to Cambridge International AS & A Level French, or the equivalent.

## 1.4 How can I find out more?

### If you are already a Cambridge school

You can make entries for this qualification through your usual channels. If you have any questions, please contact us at [info@cambridgeinternational.org](mailto:info@cambridgeinternational.org)

### If you are not yet a Cambridge school

Learn about the benefits of becoming a Cambridge school at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/startcambridge](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/startcambridge)

Email us at [info@cambridgeinternational.org](mailto:info@cambridgeinternational.org) to find out how your organisation can register to become a Cambridge school.

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## 2. Teacher support

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### 2.1 Support materials

You can go to our public website at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/olevel](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/olevel) to download current and future syllabuses together with specimen papers or past question papers, examiner reports and grade threshold tables from one series.

For teachers at registered Cambridge schools a range of additional support materials for specific syllabuses is available online from the School Support Hub. Go to [www.cambridgeinternational.org/support](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/support) (username and password required). If you do not have access, speak to the Teacher Support coordinator at your school.

### 2.2 Endorsed resources

We work with publishers who provide a range of resources for our syllabuses including print and digital materials. Resources endorsed by Cambridge International go through a detailed quality assurance process to make sure they provide a high level of support for teachers and learners.

We have resource lists which can be filtered to show all resources, or just those which are endorsed by Cambridge International. The resource lists include further suggestions for resources to support teaching. See [www.cambridgeinternational.org/i-want-to/resource-centre](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/i-want-to/resource-centre) for further information.

### 2.3 Training

We offer a range of support activities for teachers to ensure they have the relevant knowledge and skills to deliver our qualifications. See [www.cambridgeinternational.org/events](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/events) for further information.

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## 3. Syllabus overview

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### 3.1 Content

The syllabus content is organised around five broad Topic areas which provide contexts for the acquisition of vocabulary and the study of grammar and structures. Through the study of these Topic areas, candidates gain insight into countries and communities where French is spoken. The Topic areas are:

- Everyday activities
- Personal and social life
- The world around us
- The world of work
- The international world.



## 3.2 Assessment

For Cambridge O Level French, all candidates take three components: Paper 1 Listening, Paper 2 Reading and Paper 4 Writing.

Candidates may choose to take a fourth component: Paper 3 Speaking.

Grades available: A*, A, B, C, D, E		Weighting of papers
<b>Paper 1 Listening</b> Candidates listen to a number of recordings and answer questions testing comprehension. 45 marks Externally assessed	approximately 45 minutes	c33%
<b>Paper 2 Reading</b> Candidates read a number of texts and answer questions testing comprehension. 45 marks Externally assessed	1 hour	c33%
<b>Paper 4 Writing</b> Candidates respond in French to three tasks. 50 marks Externally assessed	1 hour	c33%

**Centres may also choose to enter candidates for speaking.** Marks for this optional component do not contribute to the overall grade candidates receive. Instead, where candidates perform to an appropriate standard, certificates record the achievement of grades 1 (high) to 5 (low) in speaking.

Paper 3 (optional)	Weighting
<b>Paper 3 Speaking*</b> (optional) Candidates complete two role plays, a topic presentation/conversation and a general conversation. 100 marks Internally assessed/externally moderated	Separately endorsed

\* Individual centres are responsible for conducting the tests and for the initial assessment, which is then subject to moderation by Cambridge International. Please see section 7 for additional information.

## Availability

This syllabus is examined in the June examination series.

This syllabus is available to private candidates.

All Cambridge schools are allocated to one of six administrative zones. Each zone has a specific timetable.

From 2020 this syllabus is not available in all administrative zones. To find out about the availability visit the syllabus page at [www.cie.org.uk/olevel](http://www.cie.org.uk/olevel)

Detailed timetables are available from [www.cie.org.uk/timetables](http://www.cie.org.uk/timetables)

## Combining this with other syllabuses

Candidates can combine this syllabus in an examination series with any other Cambridge International syllabus, except:

- Cambridge IGCSE First Language French (0501)
- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

Please note that Cambridge O Level, Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) (Level 1/Level 2 Certificate) syllabuses are at the same level.

## 4. Syllabus aims and assessment objectives

### 4.1 Syllabus aims

The aims of the syllabus outline the educational purposes of a course in a foreign language for the Cambridge O Level examination. They are not listed in order of priority.

The syllabus aims are to:

- develop the ability to communicate effectively using French
- offer insights into the culture and society of countries where French is spoken
- develop awareness of the nature of language and language learning
- encourage positive attitudes towards speakers of other languages and a sympathetic approach to other cultures and civilisations
- provide enjoyment and intellectual stimulation
- develop transferable skills (e.g. analysis, memorising, drawing of inferences) to complement other areas of the curriculum
- form a sound base of the skills, language and attitudes required for progression to work or further study, either in French or another subject area.

### 4.2 Assessment objectives

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

**AO1** Understand and respond to spoken language

**AO2** Understand and respond to written language

**AO4** Communicate in writing, showing knowledge of a range and variety of vocabulary, and applying French grammar and structures accurately.

In addition, candidates taking the optional Component 3 Speaking will be assessed on their ability to:

**AO3** Communicate in speech, showing knowledge of a range and variety of vocabulary, and applying French grammar and structures accurately.

### 4.3 Relationship between assessment objectives and components

The marks allocated to each of the assessment objectives are summarised below.

	Paper 1 Listening (marks)	Paper 2 Reading (marks)	Component 3 Speaking (marks)	Paper 4 Writing (marks)	Weighting for qualification (%)
AO1	45				c33%
AO2		45			c33%
AO3			100		Separately endorsed
AO4				50	c33%

## 5. Syllabus content

### 5.1 The *Defined Content Booklet*

A *Defined Content Booklet* is provided to guide teachers and candidates preparing for this examination. It should be downloaded from the Cambridge International website at [www.cie.org.uk](http://www.cie.org.uk) and includes the following sections:

- *Topic areas*: the list of topic areas from which all textual material used in the examination will be drawn.
- *Minimum Core Vocabulary*: the list of vocabulary to be tested in Sections 1 and 2 of Papers 1 and 2, Role Plays A of Paper 3 and Section 1 of Paper 4.
- *Grammar and structures*: the list of grammar and structures that candidates aiming at grades C to E are expected to learn, and a supplementary list for those aiming at grades A\* to B.

The table below summarises the relationship between the Defined Content and the question papers.

Paper	Section	Topic areas	Minimum Core Vocabulary	Grammar and structures
Paper 1	1	A, B, C	✓	Part 1
	2	A, B, C, D*, E*	✓	Part 1
	3	A, B, C, D, E		Parts 1 and 2
Paper 2	1	A, B, C	✓	Part 1
	2	A, B, C, D*, E*	✓	Part 1
	3	A, B, C, D, E		Parts 1 and 2
Paper 3	Role Plays A	A, B, C	✓	Part 1
	Role Plays B	A, B, C, D, E		Part 1
Paper 4	1	A, B, C, D <sup>†</sup> , E <sup>†</sup>	✓	Part 1
	2	A, B, C, D, E		Parts 1 and 2

\* Where Section 2 of this paper features passages based on Topic areas D and E, only vocabulary from the Minimum Core Vocabulary will be tested.

† Where Section 1 of this paper features questions based on Topic areas D and E, only vocabulary from the Minimum Core Vocabulary will be tested.

## 5.2 Topic list

Candidates will be required to show knowledge and understanding of the five Topic areas listed below. These provide contexts for the acquisition of vocabulary and the study of grammar and structures. Through the study of these Topic areas, candidates gain insight into countries and communities where French is spoken. For further guidance on these Topic areas, please refer to the O Level French *Defined Content Booklet*. In the optional Speaking test, candidates also have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of a topic of their own choice which might be outside the list below.

	Topic areas	Examination topics
<b>Area A</b>	<b>Everyday activities</b> Home life and school	Home life A1
		School routine A2
		Food, health and fitness Eating and drinking A3
		Health and fitness A4
<b>Area B</b>	<b>Personal and social life</b> Self, family and personal relationships	Self, family, pets, personal relationships B1
		House and home B2
		Leisure, entertainments, invitations B3
		Eating out B4
		Holidays and special occasions Festivals and special occasions B5
		Holidays; getting around B6
		Accommodation B7
<b>Area C</b>	<b>The world around us</b> Home town and local area	Home town and geographical surroundings C1
		Shopping C2
		Public services C3
		Natural and made environment Natural environment C4
		Weather C5
		Finding the way C6
		People, places and customs Meeting people C7
		Places and customs C8
		Travel and transport C9
		<b>Area D</b>
Future career plans D2		
Employment D3		
Language and communication in the work place Communication D4		
Language at work D5		
<b>Area E</b>	<b>The international world</b> Tourism at home and abroad	Holiday travel and transport (see also C9) E1
		Geographical surroundings (see also C1) E2
		Weather (see also C5) E3
		Life in other countries and communities Places and customs (see also C8) E4
		Food and drink (see also A3) E5
		Meeting people (see also C7) E6
		World events and issues Issues according to available resources and individual interest E7

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## 6. Description of components

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All examination papers are set entirely in French: this includes rubrics and all questions. All questions requiring written answers, including questions testing Listening and Reading comprehension, are to be answered in French.

**Dictionaries are not permitted in the examination.**

### 6.1 Paper 1: Listening

**Approximately 45 minutes, 45 marks**

The Listening examination will be provided to centres on a pre-recorded CD. All listening material will be heard twice by candidates and appropriate pauses for candidates to write their answers will be included on the recording.

All candidates must attempt all three sections.

Candidates will encounter a variety of question types on the Listening Paper and wherever possible objective questions are used, requiring little writing in French. Where candidates are required to produce written answers in French, it is important that they write briefly, relevantly and concisely. Long answers often contain irrelevant information which can distort meaning and candidates writing at length may find it hard to keep up with the recording.

The aim of this paper is to test candidates' listening comprehension skills and therefore they are not penalised for incorrect or inaccurate language unless it makes their answers ambiguous.

Answers written in any language other than French are ignored.

#### **Section 1 (15 marks)**

Candidates hear short recordings, sometimes involving two speakers, which are tested mainly by visual material. The recordings contain largely factual information about travel, weather, opening times, facilities available, food, etc. and candidates identify main points and some details. Most of the questions are objective, one or two require a very brief written answer.

#### **Section 2 (15 marks)**

Candidates hear recordings of short monologues, conversations or interviews containing factual material and opinions. They listen for main points and identify details. They recognise simple attitudes and opinions. Most of the questions are objective, some require answers in French.

#### **Section 3 (15 marks)**

Candidates hear recordings of two longer and more complex conversations/interviews. They listen for main points and detail. There will be questions to test appreciation of the speakers' use of language to express agreement or disagreement, apologies or complaints, attitudes, emotions and ideas etc., as well as the candidates' understanding of the gist of the conversation. Some of the questions are objective, some require short answers in French.

## Administration of the Listening examination

Cambridge International will supply centres with one audio CD for every 20 candidates, and one spare. These can be kept by the centre after the examination. Centres are strongly advised to hold the test in rooms which are suitable for up to 30 candidates at a time. If centres have equipment which is especially powerful, more candidates may be accommodated without special permission, but no special appeals will be entertained. In exceptional circumstances, centres may transfer material from CD to audio cassette, but this should be done under strict security conditions with adequate supervision.

CDs must be spot-checked as soon as they are received. Shortly before the examination day (e.g. the teaching day before), CDs must be spot-checked again, in the room to be used for the examination, to test the acoustics.

In the examination, the invigilator should instruct candidates to open their Question Paper as s/he starts the recording. Once the recording is started, it must run without interruption. The recording must not be 'rewound' to go back for a question which may have been missed because of noise from outside (e.g. aircraft), and candidates should be warned of this before the test is started. The recording may only be stopped/paused if there is a serious emergency, and must then be restarted from exactly the same place, once the emergency has been dealt with. In such cases, an application for Special Consideration must be made and sent directly to Cambridge International (see the *Cambridge Handbook*). Centres must state the point on the recording at which any interruption took place and the reasons for and length of the interruption. If, as a result of the interruption, there is reason to believe that candidates may not have clearly heard parts of the recording, a note of the question numbers affected should also be included.

Transcripts of the recording are issued with the published Mark Scheme.

## 6.2 Paper 2: Reading

### 1 hour, 45 marks

All candidates must attempt all three sections.

Candidates will encounter a variety of question types on the Reading Paper. The paper is designed to test comprehension skills and includes objective questions and questions which require candidates to write answers in French. Where candidates are required to produce written answers in French, they are not penalised for incorrect or inaccurate language unless it makes their answers ambiguous. It is important that they write briefly, relevantly and concisely. Provided that answers are unambiguous, long answers in full sentences are often not required. Candidates should be encouraged to paraphrase and manipulate the language in order to answer questions appropriately. They are unlikely to score high marks on this paper if they simply copy large chunks from the stimulus material, with no attempt to select what is relevant.

Answers written in any language other than French are ignored.

#### Section 1 (15 marks)

- *Exercise 1* (5 marks): candidates read a series of short notices, signs, instructions, messages, advertisements, etc. and answer multiple-choice questions.
- *Exercise 2* (5 marks): candidates read a series of short statements and complete a matching exercise which tests the main words in these statements.
- *Exercise 3* (5 marks): candidates read a short text in the form of an email, message, postcard, letter, etc. Questions are objective and test the main points and some detail.

### **Section 2 (15 marks)**

- *Exercise 1* (5 marks): candidates read a short text in the form of a brochure, guide, etc. Questions are objective and test the main points and specific detail.
- *Exercise 2* (10 marks): candidates read a longer text in the form of a letter, email, etc. Questions test general understanding of the main points, which includes recognising simple attitudes and opinions. Questions require short answers in French.

### **Section 3 (15 marks)**

- *Exercises 1 and 2* (15 marks): candidates read two longer, more complex texts. Questions test general and specific comprehension. They will also require candidates to identify attitudes, emotions and ideas, the main points or themes, and to draw conclusions. Some of the questions are objective, some require short answers in French.

## **6.3 Paper 4: Writing**

### **1 hour, 50 marks**

All candidates must attempt both sections.

Answers written in any language other than French are ignored.

#### **Section 1 (20 marks)**

- *Question 1* (5 marks): candidates are required to write a series of single words linked to a topic. Suggestions to help the candidate (in the form of pictures) are provided on the question paper, but any words relevant to the topic that are produced by the candidate in the examination will be considered for reward.
- *Question 2* (15 marks): a directed writing task. 80–90 words in total are required. 10 marks are available for Communication and 5 marks for Language.

Marks are only awarded for material which addresses the set tasks. Minus marks are never used: candidates are given every opportunity to gain marks for what they can do.

#### **Section 2 (30 marks)**

- *Question 3* (30 marks): candidates are offered a choice of three tasks (an email/letter, an article, and a narrative) and must complete one of these. 130–140 words in total are required. 10 marks are available for Communication, 8 marks for Verbs and 12 marks for Other linguistic features.

Candidates are expected to communicate accurately and should make use of a wide variety of idiom, vocabulary, structure and appropriate tenses. A system of positive marking is used. Irrelevant material is not rewarded.



## 7 Optional Speaking Test

### 7.1 Paper 3: Speaking

**Approximately 15 minutes, 100 marks**

The Speaking test consists of a single interview with three compulsory parts:

- Test 1: Role Plays
- Test 2: Topic Presentation/Conversation
- Test 3: General Conversation.

The Role Play tasks are provided by Cambridge International, but individual centres are responsible for conducting the tests and for the initial assessment. This assessment is then subject to moderation by Cambridge International.

Full instructions on the conduct and assessment of the Speaking test are provided in the *Teachers' Notes Booklet* and *Role Play Cards*. These items are despatched to centres on the basis of their Estimated Entries and it is therefore important that centres submit Estimated Entries for the syllabus by the deadline published in the *Cambridge Handbook*.

Specimen copies of the *Teachers' Notes Booklet* and *Role Play Cards* can be downloaded from the Cambridge International Teacher Support website and contain the instructions for the conduct and assessment of the Speaking test. It is crucial that teachers/Examiners study these instructions well in advance of their first Speaking test so that any doubts or queries can be resolved in good time.

#### Structure of the Speaking test

##### **Test 1: Role Plays (approximately 5 minutes, 30 marks)**

Cambridge International supplies a number of alternative *Role Play Cards* which the teacher/Examiner allocates at random to candidates during each session of examining. Each candidate is given **one** card containing two role play situations, each of which consists of five tasks. Each candidate is examined in both role play situations on the card they have been given. The first role play (Role Play A) is more straightforward than the second (Role Play B). Candidates should be allowed approximately 15 minutes to prepare their two role play situations. They may not take any written notes into the preparation room nor may they make any notes during their preparation time. Candidates should have a copy of the Role Play Card they have prepared to refer to in the examination room but must not be allowed to take it away with them after the test.

Each role play situation specifies the roles of the teacher/Examiner and candidate. Teacher/Examiners must conduct the role plays in accordance with the instructions and script provided in the *Teachers' Notes Booklet*. They must prepare the situations carefully so that the candidate's tasks follow on naturally from the response of the teacher/Examiner. As marks can only be awarded for the stipulated tasks, the teacher/Examiner must not create extra tasks, and if a candidate misses out a task, should try to guide him/her back to it, in as natural a way as possible. It does not matter that this may lead to tasks occurring in a different order, as long as they are all attempted.

For the Mark Scheme, see Table A in section 7.2.

**Test 2: Topic Presentation/Conversation (approximately 5 minutes, 30 marks)**

This part of the test starts with a one to two minute presentation by the candidate on a topic of his/her choice s/he they will have prepared in advance. The teacher/Examiner will follow up the presentation with specific spontaneous questions on the topic, bringing the total time for the Topic Presentation and Topic Conversation to approximately five minutes.

Candidates are encouraged to choose a topic in which they have a personal interest. Suitable subjects might be, for example: 'School life', 'Hobbies and pastimes' (general or specific), 'My country', 'Life in another country', 'My ambitions', 'Holidays'. Topics dealing with politics or social and economic issues are ambitious for this level of achievement and may disadvantage candidates if they do not possess the linguistic skills and maturity of ideas which such topics necessitate. Candidates should be encouraged to prepare different topics within a centre and should not be allowed to present 'Myself' or 'My life' as topics, as these can often pre-empt the General Conversation section. **Candidates may use illustrative material, e.g. photographs, if this seems appropriate to their topic, but are not allowed to use written notes of any kind.**

The teacher/Examiner will allow the candidate to speak for one to two minutes uninterrupted on his/her chosen topic before starting the Topic Conversation. Where a candidate has been talking for two minutes and shows no sign of finishing his/her presentation, the teacher/Examiner must interrupt and start the Topic Conversation.

In the Topic Conversation, candidates should be able to respond to questions in a spontaneous and natural manner. It is the extent to which candidates can manipulate their prepared material according to the needs of the teacher/Examiner that determines their marks and they must not be allowed to deliver a prepared monologue or a series of obviously prepared replies.

The teacher/Examiner **must** try to lead the candidate into using other tenses. For a mark of 7 or above to be awarded for Language, candidates must show that they can use past and future tenses accurately and the teacher/Examiner needs to ask questions which allow them to do this. In order to extend the candidate as far as possible, the teacher/Examiner should probe, explore, ask for explanations, justifications, enlargements, descriptions (*how? when? why? tell me a bit more about... etc.*).

For the Mark Scheme, see Tables B and C in section 7.2.

**Test 3: General Conversation (approximately 5 minutes, 30 marks)**

The Topic Conversation will lead into a spontaneous discussion of a more general nature. The teacher/Examiner will announce the transition to the General Conversation and should ease the candidate into the General Conversation by starting out from any point of interest noted earlier or by asking a couple of general 'starter' questions relating to the candidate's everyday life, e.g. school, home, town, journey to and from school, free time (evenings, weekends), holidays, hobbies. All candidates can reasonably be expected to have the command of vocabulary and idiom necessary for this.

The teacher/Examiner should aim to cover two or three of the Defined Content Examination Topics in this section of the test (listed in the Syllabus Content section of this syllabus). With weaker candidates, it may be necessary to cover a greater number of topics superficially, but with more able candidates, the teacher/Examiner should ask a series of linked questions on just two or three topics, in order to explore these in greater depth. Precise factual information or knowledge is not required and candidates must not be penalised for lack of such knowledge. Questions must be adjusted to the candidate's ability and the teacher/Examiner should be ready to pass on quickly to another subject if candidates are obviously out of their depth.

Candidates are expected to give natural replies to questions; their answers need not therefore be in the form of complete sentences. The teacher/Examiner should avoid asking questions which can be answered with 'yes' or 'no' and should instead use a variety of question types and interrogative adverbs, ranging from a basic level of simple questions which demand short predictable responses, e.g. *when? how many? how long? with whom? with what? how?* etc. to more searching questions such as *why? tell me about... what do you think about...?* Questions should be adjusted to the candidate's ability. However, as in the Topic Conversation, the teacher/Examiner must try to extend the candidate as far as possible by giving him/her the opportunity to explain and justify his/her opinions.

As in the Topic Conversation, the teacher/Examiner must try to lead the candidate into using other tenses (themes could be visits to other countries, plans for the future, etc.) and the candidate can then be extended as far as possible. For a mark of 7 or above to be awarded for Language, candidates must show that they can use past and future tenses accurately and teachers/Examiners need to ask questions which allow them to do this.

For the Mark Scheme, see Tables B and C in section 7.2.

#### Test 4: Impression (10 marks)

At the end of the Speaking test, based on the candidate's overall performance, the teacher/Examiner awards a mark for pronunciation, intonation and fluency.

For the Mark Scheme, see Table D in section 7.2.

## Administration of the Speaking test

### Dates for Speaking test

The Speaking test takes place before the main examination series as notified on the timetable. Each centre decides on a convenient period within the dates specified on the timetable to conduct the Speaking tests.

### Appointment of teacher/Examiner

Each centre selects its own teacher/Examiner to conduct and assess the Speaking tests. This is normally a teacher from within the Languages department, but could be someone from outside the centre.

**In the interests of standardisation, there will be only one teacher/Examiner per centre.** Where a centre wishes to use additional teacher/Examiners, permission to do so **must** be sought from Cambridge International before the start of each Speaking test period. Permission to use more than one teacher/Examiner will only be granted on the understanding that teacher/Examiners at the centre work together to ensure a common approach to the conduct of the Speaking tests and the application of the mark scheme. The sample the centre submits to Cambridge International must include the work of each teacher/Examiner and a Speaking examination *Working Mark Sheet* must be submitted for each teacher/Examiner, with candidate names and numbers clearly entered. Guidelines for the internal standardisation/moderation of Speaking tests are available from Cambridge International.

### Arrangements for the Speaking tests

It is the centre's responsibility to make available suitable rooms and good quality equipment in order to ensure the smooth running of the Speaking test. Examination conditions must prevail in the area where the Speaking tests take place and adequate supervision must be provided to ensure that each candidate can prepare his/her role plays in silence and without distraction. Dictionaries and writing materials are not allowed in the preparation room.

### Preparation of confidential test materials

Confidential test materials (*Teachers' Notes Booklet* and *Role Play Cards*) are sent to centres approximately two to three weeks before the start of the assessment period and include full instructions on how to conduct and assess the Speaking tests. These should be opened in the four working days before the centre's assessment starts and studied carefully by the teacher/Examiner before conducting his/her first Speaking test. Teacher/Examiners who have prepared their own roles fully and are confident in what they are doing are better able to help candidates who experience any difficulty. Once the materials have been opened, the Speaking tests must be completed as soon as is realistically possible. Once the centre has completed the Speaking tests, the materials remain confidential and must be kept in a secure place by the centre until the end of the examination period. Candidates must not have knowledge of the role play situations in advance of the test.

### Recording of the Speaking test

**The centre must record the Speaking tests of all candidates.** The centre will then select the sample for External moderation according to the instructions below. Only the recordings chosen as part of the sample for External moderation must be sent to Cambridge International. The other recordings must be retained at the centre until the result enquiry period has elapsed as they may be requested by Cambridge International at a later stage.

### Composition of sample for External moderation

In order to allow Cambridge International to accurately check the standard of assessment, each centre must select and send to Cambridge International a recorded sample as follows:

- **Centres entering 1–16 candidates** must send the recordings of all candidates
- **Centres entering 17 or more candidates** must send:
  - (i) the recordings of the first 10 candidates according to candidate number
  - and**
  - (ii) the recordings of 6 candidates spread evenly across the ability range. The candidates selected should be representative of the range of marks awarded by the centre and should be spread as evenly as possible across that range. If possible, the recordings of the strongest and the weakest candidates at the centre should be included, with the other recordings spaced at equal intervals in between.

**Note:** Centres entering 17 or more candidates must send a total of 16 recordings. The category (ii) candidates must be chosen from candidates who do not fall into category (i). In centres with just over 17 candidates, Cambridge International accepts this may mean that the category (ii) candidates are not fully representative of the range.

### Presentation of the sample for External moderation

Moderation samples must be recorded at normal speed on to standard format CDs. Mini CDs must not be used for sending the moderation sample to Cambridge International. Each candidate's file must be saved individually and saved as .mp3 so that it can be accessed for the purpose of moderation. **The centre is responsible for supplying blank CDs in order to record the Speaking tests of all its candidates.** All recording equipment must be of as high a standard as possible to ensure that moderation samples are clearly audible.

### Feedback on conduct and assessment of Speaking tests

Centres will receive a brief report on the outcome of moderation (*Form CW/C/REP*).

## 7.2 Marking instructions for the Speaking test

### General principles

- You are urged to use the full range of marks, bearing in mind that it is not necessary for a candidate to be of native speaker standard to be given maximum marks within any single category.
- Adopt a positive approach: award marks based on what the candidate can do rather than deducting marks for errors.
- Above all else, please be consistent in your marking. The moderation process allows for adjustments to be made to consistently harsh or consistently generous marking. If you are unsure of the mark to award, err on the side of generosity.

It is important that teacher/Examiners award marks positively. In order to ensure that they reward achievement rather than penalise failure or omissions, teacher/Examiners should get in the habit of starting at the bottom of the Mark Schemes and working upwards through the descriptors when awarding marks.

The teacher/Examiner should adopt a 'best-fit' approach. For each of the assessment criteria, Communication (Table B), Language (Table C) and Impression (Table D), the teacher/Examiner must select the set of descriptors provided in the Mark Scheme that most closely describes the quality of the work being marked. As the teacher/Examiner works upwards through the Mark Scheme, s/he will eventually arrive at a set of descriptors that fits the candidate's performance. When s/he reaches this point, the teacher/Examiner should always then check the descriptors in the band above to confirm whether or not there is just enough evidence to award a mark in the higher band.

When awarding the marks for the Topic Presentation/Conversation the teacher/Examiner may find that the quality of the work produced in the presentation is superior to that produced in the conversation (or vice versa). In such cases, the teacher/Examiner will need to award a mark that takes into account both the strengths and weaknesses of the performance.

To select the most appropriate mark within each set of descriptors, teachers/Examiners should use the following guidance:

- If most of the descriptors fit the work, then the teacher/Examiner will award the middle mark in the band.
- If the descriptors fully fit the work (and the teacher/Examiner had perhaps been considering the band above), the highest of the three marks will be awarded.
- If there is just enough evidence (and the teacher/Examiner had perhaps been considering the band below), then the lowest mark in the band will be awarded.

Where there are only two marks within a band, the choice will be between work which in most respects meets the descriptors and work which just meets the descriptors.

## Table A – Mark Scheme for Test 1: Role Plays (30 marks)

In this part of the Speaking test, the teacher/Examiner plays the part of a sympathetic native speaker with no knowledge of the candidate's first language.

The Role Plays test the ability of candidates to communicate needs, information, requests, etc., in plausibly life-like situations. Intelligibility is therefore more important than grammatical or syntactic accuracy. However, only verbal communication is assessed: credit is not given for gestures, facial expressions or other non-verbal forms of communication.

Candidates are required to give natural responses, not necessarily in the form of full sentences. The use of appropriate register and correct idiom is rewarded.

Each of the ten tasks to be performed in the role plays will be assessed using the mark scheme below. Marks may not be awarded for the completion of tasks other than those specified by Cambridge International in the *Role Play Cards/Teachers' Notes Booklet*, nor may they be awarded for tasks that are omitted.

An accurate utterance which not only conveys the meaning but which is expressed in native idiom and appropriate register. Minor errors (adjective endings, use of prepositions, etc.) are tolerated. The utterance is intelligible and the task of communication is achieved.	3
The language used is not necessarily the most appropriate to the situation and may contain inaccuracies which do not obscure the meaning.	2
Communication of some meaning is achieved, but the native speaker would find the message ambiguous or incomplete.	1
The utterance is unintelligible to the native speaker.	0

### Notes

- 1 If there are two elements in a task and only one is completed, then a maximum of one mark only may be awarded.
- 2 Short utterances, if appropriate, can be worth three marks.

## Tables B and C – Mark Schemes for Test 2: Topic Presentation/Conversation and Test 3: General Conversation (2 × 30 marks)

Each of Tests 2 (Topic Presentation/Conversation) and 3 (General Conversation) is awarded two marks:

- a mark out of 15 for Communication (see Table B)
- a mark out of 15 for Language (see Table C).

### Table B – Mark Scheme for Communication

This assesses the candidate's response in terms of comprehension of the teacher/Examiner, immediacy of reaction/response, and successful transmission of messages (including presentation of material in the topic).

Outstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A spontaneous interchange between candidate and Examiner. Candidate responds fully and confidently to all question types.</li> <li>• Can justify and explain routinely.</li> <li>• Very consistent performance. Not necessarily of native speaker standard.</li> </ul>	14–15
Very good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally understands questions first time, but may require occasional rephrasing. Can respond satisfactorily to both straightforward and unexpected questions.</li> <li>• Regularly develops own ideas and opinions and provides justifications.</li> </ul>	12–13
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has no difficulty with straightforward questions and responds satisfactorily to some unexpected ones.</li> <li>• Communicates essential elements and can expand occasionally.</li> <li>• Regularly expresses opinions with some simple justifications.</li> </ul>	10–11
Satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands most straightforward questions, but has difficulty with some unexpected ones and needs some rephrasing.</li> <li>• Communicates most of the essential elements.</li> <li>• Can convey simple, straightforward opinions.</li> </ul>	7–9
Weak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has difficulty with many straightforward questions, but still attempts an answer.</li> <li>• Communicates simple pieces of information.</li> </ul>	4–6
Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequently has difficulty understanding the questions and has great difficulty in replying.</li> <li>• Communicates a few facts.</li> </ul>	1–3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicates no relevant information.</li> </ul>	0

## Table C – Mark Scheme for Language

This assesses the linguistic content of the candidate's answers in terms of complexity, accuracy and range of structures, vocabulary and idiom.

Outstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very accurate use of a wide range of structures, vocabulary and idiom with occasional errors in more complex language.</li> <li>• Not necessarily of native speaker standard.</li> </ul>	14–15
Very good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide range of mostly accurate structures and vocabulary.</li> </ul>	12–13
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good range of generally accurate structures, varied vocabulary.</li> </ul>	10–11
Satisfactory*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate range of structures and vocabulary. <b>Can use past and future tenses accurately.</b> Some ambiguity.</li> </ul>	7–9
Weak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some manipulation of structures and awareness of verbs, though often faulty and/or incomplete. Shows elementary, limited vocabulary.</li> </ul>	4–6
Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows very limited range of structures and vocabulary.</li> </ul>	1–3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nothing coherent or accurate enough to be comprehensible.</li> </ul>	0

\* Candidates who do not show that they are able to use past and future tenses accurately cannot be awarded a mark in the Satisfactory band or above for Language.

## Table D – Mark Scheme for Impression (10 marks)

A mark out of 10 is awarded for Impression. This mark assesses the candidate's performance across the whole Speaking test in terms of pronunciation, intonation and fluency.

Very good pronunciation, intonation and fluency; an occasional slight mistake or hesitation. Not necessarily of native speaker standard.	9–10
Good pronunciation and fluency; makes a fair attempt at correct intonation and expression; some mistakes and/or hesitation.	7–8
A fair degree of fluency and accuracy in pronunciation despite quite a number of errors; some attempt at intonation and expression.	5–6
Conveys some meaning despite a lack of fluency and many errors; pronunciation strongly influenced by first language.	3–4
Many gross errors; frequently incomprehensible.	1–2
Nothing comprehensible.	0



### 7.3 Completion of the Speaking examination *Working Mark Sheet*

Candidates' marks must be recorded on the Speaking examination *Working Mark Sheet*. Candidates must be marked as they are being examined and not afterwards from a recording. The Speaking examination *Working Mark Sheet*, and the instructions for completing it, may be downloaded from [www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples). The database will ask you for the syllabus code (i.e. 3015) and your centre number, after which it will take you to the correct form. Follow the instructions when completing the form.

### 7.4 Internal moderation

Centres are required to request permission from Cambridge International if they wish to use more than one teacher/Examiner to conduct and assess the Speaking test for their candidates. This permission is only granted on the understanding that internal moderation must be carried out at the centre. This is in order to ensure that marks submitted by the centre are consistent for all candidates, irrespective of which teacher/Examiner conducted and assessed the test. The final column on the *Working Mark Sheet* (Internal and/or External moderation) should be used to record the results of Internal moderation, and details of Internal moderation procedures must be enclosed with the materials for External moderation.

### 7.5 Arrangements for External moderation

The deadlines and methods for submitting internally assessed marks and work are in the *Cambridge Handbook* available on our website.

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## 8. Other information

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### Equality and inclusion

We have taken great care in the preparation of this syllabus and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind. To comply with the UK Equality Act (2010), we have designed this qualification with the aim of avoiding direct and indirect discrimination.

The standard assessment arrangements may present unnecessary barriers for candidates with disabilities or learning difficulties. Arrangements can be put in place for these candidates to enable them to access the assessments and receive recognition of their attainment. Access arrangements will not be agreed if they give candidates an unfair advantage over others or if they compromise the standards being assessed.

Candidates who are unable to access the assessment of any component may be eligible to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have taken.

Information on access arrangements is in the *Cambridge Handbook* at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsOfficers](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsOfficers)

### Language

This syllabus is available in English only. The associated assessment materials are available in French.

### Making entries

Exams officers are responsible for submitting entries to Cambridge International. We encourage them to work closely with you to make sure they enter the right number of candidates for the right combination of syllabus components. Entry option codes and instructions for submitting entries are in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*. Your exams officer has a copy of this guide.

### Estimated entries

You must make estimated entries for this syllabus. This will enable us to send you early question papers and pre-release materials, and ensure you have the necessary materials to carry out assessments at the specified time.

Further information about making estimated entries can be found in the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsOfficers](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsOfficers)

## Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as 'administrative zones'. We allocate all Cambridge schools to one administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable. Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

## Retakes

Candidates can retake the whole qualification as many times as they want to. This is a linear qualification so candidates cannot re-sit individual components.

## Grading and reporting

Cambridge O Level results are shown by one of the grades A\*, A, B, C, D or E, indicating the standard achieved, A\* being the highest and E the lowest. 'Ungraded' indicates that the candidate's performance fell short of the standard required for grade E. 'Ungraded' will be reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. The letters Q (result pending), X (no result) and Y (to be issued) may also appear on the statement of results but not on the certificate.

## How students and teachers can use the grades

Assessment at Cambridge O Level has two purposes:

- to measure learning and achievement

The assessment:

- confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus, to the levels described in the grade descriptions.

- to show likely future success

The outcomes:

- help predict which students are well prepared for a particular course or career and/or which students are more likely to be successful
- help students choose the most suitable course or career.

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