

CHINESE AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Paper 0523/01
Reading and Writing

Key messages

- In the reading section, candidates are required to understand and respond to information presented in a variety of forms. They are expected not only to comprehend the information in the passages but also to distinguish between facts, ideas, and opinions. Candidates should demonstrate the ability to extract specific, relevant information from various text types and to organise and present it in a logical manner.
- In the writing section, candidates need to demonstrate that they can communicate clearly and appropriately in written Chinese to convey information and express opinions. They are expected to use a range of vocabulary and to show control of a variety of grammatical structures. The register should be appropriate and writing conventions such as paragraphing and punctuation should be followed. Characters produced by candidates should be accurate.
- Candidates should choose either the traditional or simplified character version of the paper and write all their answers in that section of the question paper booklet. They must not answer in both versions. If a candidate begins answering in one section by mistake and then switches to the other, they must cross out any work they do not wish the examiner to consider.
- Candidates should aim to be precise when answering questions. While notes may be made on the question paper, any work that the candidate does not wish the examiner to consider must be clearly crossed out. Marks cannot be awarded if the examiner is required to 'choose' the correct answer from a longer response.

General comments

Performance on this component was good. The majority of candidates were able to understand the three reading passages in detail. In the writing section, most candidates demonstrated that they could communicate competently in the target language. Many responses successfully and clearly conveyed interesting ideas, though care should be taken to ensure precision in the use of simple grammatical structures. Some candidates also need to take care when writing characters to ensure clarity and accuracy.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

Questions 1–7

In this exercise, candidates are presented with a blank form and need to complete it according to their understanding of the passage. A high level of accuracy is needed to score well.

For **Question 1**, candidates needed to give a precise response. Most answered correctly with 硕士.

Question 2 was one of the more challenging questions in this exercise. The strongest candidates answered correctly with 复兴木雕传统手工艺. Many candidates gave responses such as 为了更好地保护佛像雕塑技艺 or 销售木雕佛像及装饰品. These answers were not accepted.

Question 3 required candidates to identify the award 米兰手工艺艺术展（获）铜奖, which many answered correctly.

Question 4 showed a mixed performance. Some candidates successfully scored one mark by selecting the correct answer 将传统手工雕刻与立体打印机配合使用 from the passage. Weaker candidates gave answers such as 山舍木器陆续推出了隔热垫、收纳盒、手机架 or 将普通的生活器具雕刻成为艺术品. This suggests that these candidates were unsure about the meaning of 创新 in the question and therefore struggled to locate the correct information in the passage.

Question 5 was generally handled well by most candidates, though some found it challenging. Stronger candidates scored with the correct answer 兼顾艺术性与实用性. Other candidates gave incorrect answers such as 符合国人的使用需求和审美 or 将普通的生活器具雕刻成为艺术品, which resulted in no marks being awarded.

Questions 6 and 7 were answered well by most candidates, who were able to extract the correct information with ease.

Overall, candidates showed confidence in locating the correct information for the questions in **Exercise 1**. Most also demonstrated care and precision in completing the form.

Exercise 2

Questions 8–16

Questions in **Exercise 2** require precise and accurate short answers. Where questions test implicit meaning, candidates are required to answer in their own words.

Question 8 required candidates to address two elements. Strong candidates scored both marks by answering 越来越多的社区小店 and 超市的租约到期后难以续约. Some candidates responded well to one of the elements but did not gain full marks. The most common error was answering 电商行业的崛起改变了百姓的消费习惯, which, while a relevant idea, was a well-known challenge, not an unexpected one.

Question 9 was handled very well by many candidates, who provided the precise answer 提供堂食. A small number of candidates incorrectly answered with 凭借充满惊喜感的差异化商品 or 背后都有畅销的独家商品 and therefore earned no credit.

Most candidates performed very well in **Question 10** by answering with 差异化商品 or 畅销的独家商品.

Question 11 showed a mixed performance. Strong candidates provided precise answers and gained both marks. Many others scored 1 mark by correctly identifying either 提高运营效率 or 有更多精力和客户交互. Weaker candidates gave answers such as 支持人工智能的摄像头和交互式显示器, 减少了食物浪费, or 节约了超市运营成本, which were not accepted.

Question 12 was found to be challenging for most candidates. The best responses demonstrated understanding of the passage's implicit meaning, correctly answering 把数据保存得更久 or 数据的存储超过一周. Many candidates provided incorrect answers such as 把数据存储量增大 or 进行全数据的分析和处理, or copied a whole sentence from the text, which resulted in no marks being awarded.

Question 13 required two elements. Most candidates successfully extracted the correct answers: 有效地管理食物库存 and 联手新创公司将丢弃的食物制成肥料产品. Some candidates only managed to provide one correct element. A small number of candidates omitted the key term 有效, leading to no marks being awarded.

Question 14 was answered very well by the majority of candidates, who correctly responded with 将“逛超市”（愈加）与情感交流、放松休闲等联系在一起.

Question 15 also required two elements. Many candidates were able to extract the correct information: 最终创造长期客户价值和 改变人们对超市的认知. A small number of candidates did not score due to providing incorrect answers such as 创造出了温馨的第三空间, 货架的高度相对较低, 客户可以清楚地看到整个空间, or 提供各式美食沉浸体验.

In short, candidates are reminded to read the questions and passage in **Exercise 2** carefully. Furthermore, they should be advised to provide precise responses, avoid lifting entire sentences from the passage, and refrain from giving incomplete answers, so that their meaning is conveyed without ambiguity.

Exercise 3

Question 17–26

In **Exercise 3**, the multiple matching exercises, it is recommended that candidates practise skimming and scan reading techniques and carefully consider each question, taking into account any distracting information in the texts. When writing their answer, candidates should clearly indicate the letter they have selected. Most candidates demonstrated a good level of understanding of the task and there were some very successful attempts at the exercise.

Overall, the whole range of marks were awarded, with most candidates achieving more than five marks. The greatest number of correct answers was for **Question 21**, and the most common wrong answers were **Question 17** and **19**. Presentation of answers was generally clear. When writing their answers, candidates are reminded that if they change their mind, they should not write the second answer over the first, but should cross out the wrong answer clearly, and write their final choice at the side.

Exercise 4

Question 27

For **Question 27**, candidates were required to write a diary entry describing their experience of publishing a school magazine. They were asked to introduce the content of the magazine, describe the difficulties they encountered, and reflect on areas they could improve.

Most candidates were aware that they should write between 100 and 120 characters, and successfully addressed the tasks given in the bullet points within the character limit.

Many candidates addressed all three-bullet points well in their diary. Some needed to explain/describe what makes this celebrity unique more clearly to access higher content marks. A brief justification is required to show candidates' understanding of the question.

In terms of language use, many candidates demonstrated that they could use simple grammatical structures effectively and precisely. To reach the highest mark band, candidates also needed to show that they can use more complex structures and sophisticated language accurately. Candidates are reminded not to use pinyin in their writing exercise.

Exercise 5

Question 28

Question 28 was a task that invited candidates to present arguments for and against a topic, concluding with their own point of view. This year, candidates were asked to write a letter to their headteacher expressing their opinions on whether teachers should select a school representative or whether students should be the ones to make the selection for attending a match.

Two written comments were provided as a stimulus to provoke candidates into thinking about the topic. Candidates were not obliged to include these and could use their own ideas and opinions. These were given as suggestions of the arguments which may be put forward, and it was expected that candidates would not simply re-state the ideas provided but present their own ideas and opinions as well.

Most candidates could clearly state their opinions. The key to success in this section is to make sure ideas are fully developed, using connective words where appropriate. Candidates needed to generate persuasive arguments and to engage the reader's interest to be awarded the highest marks. The highest scoring essays contained interesting and sustained personal opinions in respect of the given issue with well-developed ideas.

In conclusion, centres should continue to support candidates in writing Chinese characters accurately. Candidates should be reminded that the use of idioms and sayings only enhances the quality of the language when used appropriately.

CHINESE AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

<p>Paper 0523/02 Listening</p>
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Key messages

- Candidates are expected to identify the key information through a range of spoken material, including talks and conversations and to be able to respond to factual information as well as abstract ideas.
- In **Exercise 1 to 3** candidates are required to provide short answers to questions in Chinese characters or pinyin. They can write either in simplified or traditional characters. If a candidate has chosen to write their answers in pinyin instead of characters, there is no requirement to use tones on the pinyin, and the spelling of the pinyin does not have to conform to the standard spelling rules. However, the answer must be completely unambiguous within the context.
- Candidates should choose either the traditional or simplified character version of the paper. They must write all their answers within their chosen section of the question paper booklet. Candidates must not answer in both versions. If a candidate starts to answer in one part of the booklet by mistake and then moves to a different character version, they must cross out any work that they do not wish the Examiner to consider.
- Candidates should attempt all questions; write clear and legible responses in the spaces provided in the question paper. Candidates should not write over their initial answers. Attempts that cannot be read, may not be credited.

General comments

Overall, candidates performed confidently in this year's examination, with many showing clear progress in their ability to identify key information from a variety of spoken materials. Most responses were concise and accurate, and stronger candidates demonstrated careful attention to contextual clues and avoided distractors.

Character accuracy continues to improve, though errors in radical choice or strokes occasionally led to ambiguity. Some candidates attempted answers in pinyin but with incorrect spelling or tones, resulting in a loss of marks. Questions requiring an understanding of attitude and nuanced meaning remained the most difficult, while multiple-choice questions generally produced good outcomes, although maintaining focus proved challenging for a number of candidates.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

Question 1 to 6

Most candidates attempted these short-answer questions successfully, showing a strong comprehension of basic information. High achievers provided precise, single answers without unnecessary details. Common mistakes included copying distractor information from the recording or using incorrect characters that changed the meaning. In most cases, a short, direct response is the most successful.

Question 1

This question was quite well attempted. Most candidates understood the whole conversation and wrote down the correct answer 爬山 in characters with ease. Another activity was mentioned, 看牙医, was mentioned in the conversation but was incorrect, which distracted some candidates.

Question 2

The majority of candidates answered this question quite well. The expected response was 西南（地区）. The word 地区 is not required in the answer. The incorrect answer 华东 or 'xi lan' were not credited.

Question 3

This question was also well answered. Many candidates were able to write the correct answer 手语 with ease. Incorrect answers such as 做饼干 or 做游戏 were not accepted.

Question 4

This question tests attitude, which many candidates found particularly challenging. The correct answers credited were 不敢相信 or 惊讶. Some candidates gave 惊喜 instead of 惊讶, which was not accepted. Any response containing both a correct and an incorrect answer was considered invalid. Candidates are advised to provide only the one answer they feel most confident about.

Question 5

Most candidates responded well to this question. To gain one mark, answers conveying the meaning of 'expensive' or 'over budget' were accepted, but responses such as 'comfortable' were not credited.

Question 6

Most candidates did well on this question, although some found it challenging. The correct answer was '谦虚'. Some candidates were unable to write the characters and responded in pinyin instead; these answers were accepted as long as the spelling and tones were unambiguous.

Exercise 2

Question 7 (a) – (h)

Candidates generally performed well in this gap-fill exercise where they heard a longer spoken extract about the term of 'beautiful good-for-nothing'. Candidates are advised to read each question carefully before listening to the recording. Candidates should not only listen for the correct targeted detail in the recording but also check their responses carefully to make sure the words used make sense in the sentence. Candidates should not include the words which are already part of the sentence printed on the question paper before or after each gap as part of their answer.

- (a) Overall, this question was very well attempted. Many candidates gained 1 mark by writing the word 流行词 accurately. Occasionally the character 词 was missed and this was not accepted.
- (b) This question proved challenging for some candidates, as although they may have learnt the word 贬义, they were not necessarily able to apply it correctly as the answer. The character 贬义 was often difficult to write accurately, so some candidates opted to respond in pinyin, which was accepted provided the spelling and tones were correct.
- (c) Many candidates were able to provide 过时 as the correct answer to this question. Some attempts, such as 错的 or 过世 were considered as incorrect as they did not convey the meaning of 'being dated'.
- (d) This was consistently well answered by the vast majority of candidates. The expected response was 头饰. The incorrect radical or pinyin were not accepted as they conveyed different meanings.
- (e) The correct answer to this question was 轻松 or 放松, words describing the feeling of being relaxed. Although 快乐 or 开心 were mentioned in the recording, they were not accepted as correct answers to this question.
- (f) This question was very challenging for candidates. Candidates should listen carefully to the context before attempting their answers. The key information was 'to save time when choosing gifts', not 'bringing surprise' or 'no need to buy gifts'.

- (g) The performance on this question was good. The majority of candidates understood and were able to write the word 交换 with ease. Occasionally, candidates wrote 交流 instead of 交换; this was not credited.
- (h) This question was answered well by most candidates, with many writing the correct answer 方言 accurately. Incorrect answers such as 外语 or 方语 were not credited.

Exercise 3

Question 8 (a) – (h)

In this exercise, candidates have to correct a detail in a sentence that contains a piece of incorrect information. Candidates heard a longer spoken text about an Opera Conductor. Candidates are advised to read each given sentence thoroughly before listening to the recording. It is also helpful for candidates to identify the type of word needed to correct the sentence, e.g. a noun/verb/adjective. Candidates also need to be careful not to rewrite the incorrect words already given in the sentence.

- (a) This question was well answered. Most candidates understood the context and were able to write the correct answer 专业. Any attempts such as 大自然 or 年轻 were not credited.
- (b) This question tested candidates' understanding of attitude vocabulary. The correct answer is 烦恼, which many candidates successfully provided. No credit was given where the incorrect character 脑 was written instead of 恼.
- (c) The expected response for this question was 没有空调, with 没有冷气 also accepted. Some incorrect attempts such as 太热了 or 三伏天 were not accepted.
- (d) This question was well answered. Many candidates were able to write the key answer 清凉 accurately in characters. Some candidates wrote 凉 instead of 凉 as a typo, but this impeded the communication and could not gain a mark.
- (e) This question required candidates to process the information cognitively and provide the correct answer 大胆 to complete the sentence. Many candidates identified the key information and wrote the correct answer; however, attempts such as 不传统 were not accepted unless expressed as the correctly written verb phrase 打破传统, which could be awarded a mark.
- (f) There was a high level of success in this question, with the expected response 退休 being correctly identified from the recording. Occasionally, the character 体 was incorrectly written as 体, which was not accepted.
- (g) This question was less well attempted than others in this exercise. The correct answer was 翻译, not 改写. Some candidates wrote 变成能懂的语言, which was close to the meaning of the text but not a complete and straightforward answer.

Exercise 4

Question 9 (a) – (h)

Overall, candidates performed well on the multiple-choice questions, which tested their ability to infer details from an interview with a photographer. Average scores were around 6 out of 8. The first four questions were answered more successfully than the last four, indicating that sustaining focus over time remains an area for improvement. **Question 9h** proved to be the most challenging, with a significant number of candidates selecting the wrong option, particularly option A. Some candidates misused these as references for other questions, such as **7d** and **7e**. It is advised that candidates need to practise on longer time concentration when listening to the longer piece of text towards the end of the exam.

CHINESE AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

<p>Paper 0523/03 Speaking</p>

Key messages

- Teacher/examiners should **introduce** each candidate at the beginning of the recording.
- **The timings** should be Presentation, 2 – 3 minutes, Topic Conversation, 4 – 5 minutes and General Conversation, 4 – 5 minutes. Timings which are too long or too short will disadvantage candidates.
- **Part 1, Presentation** should be **related** to Chinese culture or an aspect of life in a Chinese-speaking country or community. A list of example topics can be found in later pages in this report.
- **Part 2, Topic Conversation** should be an **interactive discussion** based on but **not repeating** the content of Presentation in **Part 1**. All questions in this session should be **relevant** to candidate's Presentation.
- **Part 3, General Conversation** should start with the teacher/examiner asking a question, and be conducted as an interactive conversation, not another presentation or a monologue from candidates. Simply delivering monologues will not provide opportunities to show **comprehension and responsiveness** skills and so will disadvantage candidates.
- Teacher/examiners should ensure that questions in both the Topic Conversation and General Conversation offer candidates plenty of opportunities to express **opinions and justifications** so as to reach the higher levels in the Mark Scheme.
- To achieve high marks in the Conversation sessions, candidates need to demonstrate they can handle **unexpected** questions with natural and spontaneous responses.
- At least two topics should be covered in the General Conversation: one has to be from **Areas A – B** and one from **Areas C – D** as set in the syllabus.

General comments

A full range of candidates' performances have been heard this year. There were many examples of interesting presentations where candidates showed evidence of thorough research and planning. Most teacher/examiners were very confident in conducting the exam, listened carefully to each candidate, asking a series of excellent searching questions pitched at the level and depth appropriate to this syllabus. In the General Conversations, centres usually covered a good balance of topic areas from the syllabus, ensuring a varied range of subjects were discussed.

The best performances were where candidates were given opportunities to provide extended responses where they could exhibit their command of the language, or when they were engaged in meaningful discussions, expressing and defending their own opinions. Candidates gained marks for responding spontaneously to questions and contributing to the conversation by conveying their ideas with clarity and precision. The strongest candidates also showed consistent and precise use of a wide range of vocabulary and a variety of structures to articulate their perspectives effectively.

Conduct of the test

The vast majority of teacher/examiners were familiar with the requirements of the IGCSE Chinese as a Second Language Speaking test and understood the importance of their role. It is important to announce the centre's information and candidate's information at the beginning of each recording. The introduction of each part of the test and flow from one session to the next should be in Chinese so as to avoid candidates switching in between languages. Timings which are either too short or too long will disadvantage candidates and so is unfair to them.

Teacher/examiners are reminded to keep their questions brief and clear, more opinion-based than fact-based, so as to support candidates to give an extended answer with their ideas and thoughts. In a very small

number of cases, questions were too long and lost, which have taken much of the exam time and made it difficult for candidates to follow and respond.

Recorded sample: quality and composition

While most centres had submitted an appropriate sample and correct documents to Submit for Assessment, in a number of cases the quality of the recordings were poor with background noise which has not only potentially affected candidate's performance but also made the moderation process difficult. Centres are reminded to find a quieter room for recording as well as to spot check the quality of all recordings and the completion of each recording before uploading to the Submit for Assessment platform.

Internal moderation

When a total mark has been changed as the result of internal moderation, the breakdown of marks should also be updated accordingly to avoid any confusion with clerical errors. Guidelines for the Internal Moderation of Speaking tests are available on the samples database:

<https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples>

Application of the mark scheme

The mark scheme was generally well understood and applied correctly. In cases where downward adjustments to marks were made, this was often where material from the presentation was repeated, and so candidates had not presented new evidence of language/structures. Other examples included where responses were more like a monologue or seemed over-prepared and so were missing the element of naturalness and spontaneity.

Comments on specific questions

Presentation

Most candidates have taken the opportunity to carry out extended research on a topic of their own interest on an aspect of Chinese culture or life in a Chinese-speaking country or community. They have demonstrated a logical organisation of personal opinions and reflections alongside their findings, which made their presentation more meaningful and engaging. It is recommended that candidates state the title of their presentation before they start, speak clearly to avoid swallowing words and do not rely solely on memorisation when they present.

The topics heard this year were diverse, indicating candidates' attentiveness towards traditions as well as to social and current affairs in their living communities. A variety of topics are listed here as an example.

- Traditional festivals and celebrations, for example, 新年贺词, 十二生肖, 南北狮, 灯谜, 门神, 年夜饭, 清明食物, 不同的中秋, 七夕与情人节, 重阳节, 中西方节日的异同, 二十四节气, 冬至, etc.
- Traditional customs and history, for example, 中国婚俗, 中西式葬礼对比, 中国的祭祀文化, 星相学, 冥婚, 风水, 缠足, 丝绸之路, etc.
- Chinese arts and handicrafts, for example, 中西方美术, 中国剪纸艺术, 丹青, 书法, 文房四宝, 四大发明, 青花瓷, 国画与油画, 中国结, 吹糖人, 皮影, 油纸伞, 剪纸, etc.
- Chinese costumes and clothing, for example, 中国服饰, 唐装与旗袍, 非物质文化遗产-刺绣、苏绣, 汉服与罗马尼亚传统服饰, 苗族传统服饰, 颜色的寓意, etc.
- Chinese cuisines and culinary, for example, 中国各地美食, 舌尖上的中国, 预制菜, 茶道, 夜宵文化, 两国餐具的差异, 中国与马来西亚外卖, 香港茶餐厅文化, 广式煲汤, 椰浆饭, 火锅, 澳门饮食, 珍珠奶茶, 咖啡和茶, 肉骨茶, 港式奶茶, 川菜, 东坡肉 螺狮粉, etc.
- Chinese music and instruments, films and performing arts, for example, 中国古筝, 琵琶, 扬琴, 二胡, 京剧, 港剧的衰落, 我对中西方电影的看法, 《哪吒2》, 中国动画, 方言歌曲, 谐音梗, 中国风歌曲, etc.
- Chinese medicine, 中医与西医, 中药, 针灸, etc.
- Traditional games and martial arts, for example, 中国传统游戏和玩具, 中国象棋, 麻将, 扯铃, 功夫, 太极, 中国足球, etc.
- Chinese philosophies and religions, for example, 古代中国的传统哲学, 百善孝为先, 重男轻女, 中西方家庭价值观, 中国的代沟问题, 华人家庭观念的价值与传承, 通过《哪吒》看中国家庭关系, etc.



- Classical classic literature and historical figures or a role model from modern society, for example, 西游记, 安史之乱, 水浒, 三国, 孙子兵法, 唐诗宋词, 兰亭序, 苏轼, 李白, 文天祥, 秦始皇, 赵云, 武则天, 孔子, 孙悟空, 诸葛亮, 西施, 梁祝; 金庸和他的小说, 邓丽君, 马化腾, 李宗伟, etc.
- Reflections of life in Chinese speaking regions or societies, for example, Education: 马来华人的教育观, 虎妈, 高考, 尊师重道, 中学生是否应该出国留学, 华文的传承, 国际学校和华校, 香港家庭教育方式, 隔代教育, etc.

Health: 中国青少年近视率, 亚洲青少年的容貌焦虑, 外卖对年轻人的影响, 校园霸凌, etc.

Travel and transportation: 中国火车发展史, 中国的马车, 中国造船史, 高铁, 亲子游, 上海天文馆, 故宫, 北京胡同, etc.

Technology: 中国电竞, 微博, 人工智能对娱乐的影响, 短视频平台, 中国国产游戏, 抖音, 拼多多, 当网红, 小红书, 电动汽车在中国, AI与非遗, etc.

Society and new trends: 中国的人口政策, 大熊猫热, 唐人街, 华人移民, 快递, 中国社会老龄化问题, 中国与贸易全球化, 中文在现代社会的重要性, 快递纸箱回收, 大学集体住宿, etc.

The presentation should be the candidate's own work based on sufficient research on the chosen topic. Candidates are advised to avoid copying large amounts of material from different sources and using these unchanged in the presentation as this will affect organisation of materials and coverage of the topic. Over ambitious language often leads to stilted or less coherent presentations.

Topic Conversation

This part of the Speaking Test should be an interactive conversation, closely relevant to what candidates have said in their presentation. Examiners should **not** ask questions which require candidates to **repeat** what they have already said in the Presentation, as this will restrict the range of language that candidates produce and can also cause confusion. The most successful conversations were those where Examiners **listened carefully** to the Presentation and asked **further open questions** that were **relevant** and logically linked, which gave candidates opportunities to provide further information, experience, opinions and justifications. For example, if the Presentation was about a famous local cuisine, the questions in the Topic Conversation could ask for detailed, further information on anything from the cooking method, special ingredients, personal experience/memories and comparisons to other cuisines, to deeper discussions on the meaning behind the local cuisine, links to history and customs, healthy dietary habits, culinary diversity, etc. The timing for this part is 4 – 5 minutes to allow deeper discussions on the topic and the materials presented in **Part 1**, Presentation.

Whilst it is expected that candidates would have thought about and prepared possible follow-up discussions around their chosen topic, they should **NOT** know any actual questions in advance. It is important that Examiners include **unexpected** questions and changes in direction of the conversation which enable candidates to show their ability to respond spontaneously, to initiate and maintain conversation in order to achieve a higher category in the Mark Scheme.

General conversation

At least two topics should be covered in the General Conversation; it has to be one from Areas A and B and one from Areas C-D. Topics chosen by the teacher/Examiner for the General Conversation should not overlap with the content of **Part Two**, Topic Conversation in this Speaking test. A full list of the topics can be found in the syllabus.

It is good practice to announce the broad topic area before asking the first question, and to link questions logically. Candidates found difficult to switch with a series of more superficial questions over many different topics.

The majority of teacher/examiners were fully aware that the level of language and depth to discuss in the conversation sessions should be beyond that expected of a Foreign Language examination. In a few cases, questions were too shallow to allow candidates to show their potential. For example, questions on 'Sports and exercise' should be more mature and in-depth, such as, 你个人觉得做运动有哪些好处? 有什么坏处? or 有人说做运动会占用学习时间, 你觉得呢? rather than more basic questions such as where they play, with whom, how long for, etc. The best examining was when candidates were invited to express their opinions on

a topic, or when teacher/examiners raised a particular issue which gave candidates the opportunity to discuss both sides of the argument. The timing for this part is another 4 – 5 minutes, which makes the whole timing for each test about 10 – 13 minutes, plus introduction time at the beginning of recording.