English Annual Examinations Guidelines

YEAR 4 (2015-2016)

The English Annual Examinations – Year 4 (2016) will target aspects of language learning that are reflected in the objectives and standards set by the Primary English Syllabus (2006).

The examinations will assess the students’ receptive and productive language skills. The students’ ability to understand texts will be assessed through the listening and reading comprehension tasks; whereas their linguistic competence and performance will be measured by the set language and writing tasks. Students’ speaking skills should be tested during the scholastic year through school-based continuous assessment.*

Table 1 shows how the weightings of marks are distributed.

**TABLE 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENT</th>
<th>WEIGHTING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking*</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Tasks</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Tasks</td>
<td>30 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Continuous Assessment of oral skills is carried out by the primary class teacher. Teachers should ensure coverage of all the speaking skills listed in the Primary English Syllabus (2006).

The English Annual Examination Papers 2016

The Listening Comprehension Examination
20% of the marks

The Listening Comprehension Examination will be recorded on CD and it will be of **30 minutes** duration.
There will be two versions of the examination paper:

1. The Teacher’s Copy which includes: Instructions for carrying out the Listening Comprehension; the text and the set tasks. (In case the audio CD does not function properly the teacher will read the script twice as instructed.)

2. The Student’s Copy which includes the set tasks. (The font will be Andika size 13.)

The listening text, fiction or non-fiction, will be **between 250 and 300 words**. The tasks set will be:

- a multiple-choice exercise;
- a True or False exercise;
- a gap-fill exercise.

The text and questions will be **heard twice**. Students will be given time to look at the set task before the first reading. They will also be given time to check their answers.

Table 2 outlines the allocation of time and details of procedure of the English Listening Comprehension Examination.

**TABLE 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Time allocated</th>
<th>Procedure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>Students read the questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b)</td>
<td>3 minutes</td>
<td>The text is heard for the first time. <em>(Students may start writing if they wish to.)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c)</td>
<td>7 minutes</td>
<td>The questions are read out and students answer them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d)</td>
<td>3 minutes</td>
<td>The text is heard for the second time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e)</td>
<td>7 minutes</td>
<td>The questions are read out and students answer any unanswered questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f)</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>Final revision of answers by students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The listening comprehension examination assesses the students’ ability to understand the text, follow oral instructions and use comprehension skills to respond appropriately.

**The Reading Comprehension, Language and Writing Examination**

Reading Comprehension, Language and Writing will be assessed in one examination session. The examination session will be **1 hour 15 minutes** long and the examination paper will carry 60% of the marks.
A. Reading Comprehension
20% of the marks

There will be two reading comprehension texts, fiction or non-fiction.

A. 1. The first text will be of not more than 60 words. The text, which may be related to the second reading comprehension text, will be one of the following:

- picture/s with a caption/s;
- dialogue/s;
- notice/s;
- story;
- message;
- set of instructions;
- extract from a newsletter / magazine / website;
- advertisement/s.

Students will be asked to carry out any of the following tasks:

- write words / phrases or numbers in gaps;
- underline; circle; tick the correct answer;
- match;
- mark a statement as True or False;
- complete grids;
- sequence;
- label pictures or simple diagrams.

A. 2. The length of the second text, fiction or non-fiction, will be about 275 words.

Students will be asked to answer a range of comprehension questions. Comprehension tasks may include:

- write words / phrases or numbers in gaps;
- underline, circle, or tick the correct answer;
- match;
- mark a statement as True or False;
- complete grids;
- sequence;
- label pictures or simple diagrams;
- produce constructed responses.

The reading comprehension tasks assess the students’ ability to understand the text and use the range of comprehension strategies specified in the Primary English Syllabus (2006). Students are expected to follow written instructions.

Although students will not be penalized for punctuation, spelling and tense errors in questions requiring constructed responses, teachers should still encourage students to write accurately.
B. Language
10% of the marks

This part will consist of two language exercises. The targeted language items will be assessed through meaningful contexts. The tasks may either be linked to the comprehension text or have separate context/s. They will assess students’ ability to use language accurately and appropriately.

C. Writing
30% of the marks

This part will consist of two short writing tasks and a long writing task.

C. 1-2. Students will be asked to complete or write two short writing tasks from the following:

- write captions;
- complete tables or charts;
- write sentences and / or questions;
- write a short text, such as a dialogue, a story, an information text, a poem, a message, a notice; menus, simple recipes, poster, postcard, identity kits, invitation cards, advertisements.

Students will be rewarded for their ability to communicate ideas / information clearly, fluently, accurately, effectively and relevantly.

C. 3. Students will be asked to plan and produce a piece of writing, between 70 and 100 words. The writing may be in the form of sentences or a paragraph. They will be offered four titles and asked to choose and write about one of them. The writing genres may include:

- an informal letter;
- sentences or a paragraph about a picture or a series of pictures;
- sentences or a paragraph about a topic;
- a paragraph about given information;
- a simple story.

Students will be rewarded for detailed and organized plans that are relevant to the chosen title; as well as accurate, well-presented and developed writings that meet the requirements of the set task and demonstrate confidence in sentence structures and / or paragraph writing, choice and range of vocabulary, style and skill in communication. Writing which is partially/totally irrelevant and / or is short/very short will be penalized.
Table 3 shows the assessment criteria for marking the longer writing task.

**TABLE 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. 3. Writing between 70 and 100 words</th>
<th>(18 marks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PLANNING</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 marks</td>
<td>1 mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No planning is evident / Only copied given prompts / listed prompts with no detail and/or totally irrelevant details</td>
<td>Planning with little detail, which might not be organized and/or totally relevant to the chosen title.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do not deduct marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar errors in the plan.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COHERENCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 marks</td>
<td>1 mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No coherence in writing</td>
<td>Generally coherent writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The writing shows a significant inability to communicate immediately with the reader. Ideas are not organized logically.</td>
<td>Information and ideas are presented with some organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COHESION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 marks</td>
<td>1 mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No cohesion in writing</td>
<td>Generally cohesive writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The writing is characterized by disjointed sentences. Poor or mistaken use of a very limited range of linking words and phrases.</td>
<td>Simple connectives <em>and, but, then</em> link clauses. Linking words and phrases are used appropriately, although there may be some over-use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SENTENCE FLUENCY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 marks</td>
<td>1 mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No use of sentence forms</td>
<td>Adequate range of sentence structures used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The writing is characterized by a list of memorized words and phrases; or words and phrases copied from the title and given prompts. No punctuation is used.</td>
<td>The writing is characterized mainly by simple and compound sentences. Most sentences are demarcated by capital letters and full stops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SENTENCE ACCURACY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 marks</td>
<td>1 mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inaccurate structures</td>
<td>Generally accurate structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Errors in grammar prevail and distort the meaning.</td>
<td>The writing mostly has grammatically correct sentences, but some mistakes in grammar cause some difficulty for the reader.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## SENTENCE ACCURACY (continued)

### Punctuation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0 marks</th>
<th>1 mark</th>
<th>2 marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Inaccurate punctuation**  
Errors in punctuation prevail and distort the meaning. | **Generally accurate punctuation**  
The writing mostly has correctly punctuated sentences, but some punctuation mistakes and omissions reduce communication. | **Completely / Almost completely accurate punctuation**  
Range of punctuation is almost always / always used correctly, with little omission. |

*(more than 10 mistakes)*  
*(between 5 and 10 mistakes)*  
*(up to 4 mistakes)*

### Spelling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0 marks</th>
<th>1 mark</th>
<th>2 marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Inaccurate spelling**  
Spelling mistakes prevail and distort the meaning. | **Generally accurate spelling**  
The writing of frequently used words is mostly correct. Some mistakes in spelling and word formation are evident. | **Completely / Almost completely accurate spelling**  
The writing has no or very few mistakes in spelling and / or word formation. |

*(more than 10 mistakes)*  
*(between 5 and 10 mistakes)*  
*(up to 4 mistakes)*

### CHOICE AND RANGE OF VOCABULARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0 marks</th>
<th>1 mark</th>
<th>2 marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Very simple vocabulary that fails to render the intended meaning**  
A few words are used repetitively often inappropriately for the task. The writing is replete with Maltesisms in expression. | **An adequate range of vocabulary conveying the intended meaning**  
Mostly simple noun phrases are used with little expansion. Less common vocabulary is used, but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation. | **An excellent range of vocabulary and idiomatic language effectively conveying the intended meaning**  
Precise word choice and collocation, fully support purpose and maintain interest. Effective use is made of content words and function words. |

### TASK ACHIEVEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0 marks</th>
<th>1 mark</th>
<th>2 marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Task not achieved**  
The writing does not follow the given instructions. | **Task partly achieved**  
The writing is adapted to meet some of the requirements of the task, e.g. the appropriate form of writing; and / or the purpose of the text. | **Task completely / almost completely achieved**  
Skilful use of the correct form demanded by the genre. All language or presentational choices match the targeted audience and purpose. Style fits the genre, e.g. informal when writing a letter to a friend. |

Mark the writing out of the total and then deduct **6 marks** for totally irrelevant writing and **4 marks** for partially irrelevant writing.

Deduct **4 marks** if the writing is shorter than 60 words. Deduct **6 marks** if the writing is shorter than 40 words.