

# English Alternative Annual Examination Guidelines for Year 4

## Alternative Paper 1 and Alternative Paper 2

(2019 - 2020)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The English Alternative Annual Examinations – namely Alternative Paper 1 and Alternative Paper 2 (2020) target aspects of language learning that are reflected in the assessment criteria set by the Learning Outcomes Framework (2012) and the LOF Supporting Documents (2019-2020) for Level 5 (in Year 3 and Year 4). Alternative Paper 1 also addresses and assesses the skills on Checklist 1 while Alternative Paper 2 addresses and assesses the skills on Checklist 2.

The English Alternative Annual Examinations – Alternative Paper 1 and Alternative Paper 2 (2020) assess the students' receptive and productive language skills. The students' ability to understand texts is assessed through the listening and reading comprehension tasks; whereas linguistic competence and performance is measured through the speaking and writing tasks.

Although Literature is an integral part of the English curriculum, it is not summatively assessed in the Alternative Annual Examination and is to be assessed throughout the year through regular continuous assessment tasks carried out by the class teacher, as indicated in the LOF Supporting Documents in Year 3 and Year 4.

## 2. THE ENGLISH ALTERNATIVE ANNUAL EXAMINATION – ALTERNATIVE PAPER 1 AND ALTERNATIVE PAPER 2

Alternative Paper 1 and Alternative Paper 2 consist of three main parts: Speaking (Part 1), Listening (Part 2) and Reading and Writing (Part 3) all of which will be different to the mainstream papers and pegged to the levels they are meant to address. Similar to the mainstream paper, the Reading and Writing Alternative Annual Examination is 1 hour 30 minutes long, with a 30-minute break in between. The table below identifies the different parts of the examination, its components, duration and their respective weighting.

ALTERNATIVE PAPER 1				
COMPONENT		DURATION	MARKS (100)	SUMMATIVE EXAM (60%)*
<b>PART 1: Speaking</b>	Task 1: Talking about oneself	8 minutes	20	10%
	Task 2: Expressing basic needs			
	Task 3: Describing a picture			
<b>PART 2: Listening</b>	Text 1 (Short) (audio/audio-visual)	30 minutes	20	10%
	Text 2 (Long) (audio/audio-visual)			
<b>PART 3: Reading and Writing</b>	<b>Section A: Reading</b>	45 minutes	20	20%
	Text A1: e.g. Matching single words to pictures			
	Text A2: e.g. Matching sentences to pictures			
	Text A3: Non-continuous / Continuous text – e.g. Matching			
	Text A4: Non-continuous/continuous text – e.g. T/ F			
<b>BREAK (30 minutes)</b>				
<b>PART 3: Reading and Writing</b>	<b>Section B: Writing</b>	45 minutes	40	20%
	Task 1: Writing at word level with a word bank			
	Task 2: Writing at word level with a word bank			
	Task 3: Short writing task at word level without support			
	Task 4: Short writing task at sentence level without support			
	Task 5: Long writing task at paragraph level with prompts			

Table 1: The individual components, the duration and the weighting of marks that the English Alternative Annual Exam Alternative Paper 1 carries

\*Continuous Assessment of the four Language components and Literature, carried out throughout the scholastic year by the class teacher, carry 40% of the final mark.

ALTERNATIVE PAPER 2				
COMPONENT		DURATION	MARKS (100)	SUMMATIVE EXAM (60%)*
<b>PART 1: Speaking</b>	Task 1: Talking about oneself	8 minutes	20	10%
	Task 2: Expressing basic needs and feelings			
	Task 3: Picture Story			
<b>PART 2: Listening</b>	Text 1: (Short) (audio/audio-visual)	30 minutes	20	10%
	Text 2: (Long) (audio/audio-visual)			
<b>PART 3: Reading and Writing</b>	<b>Section A: Reading</b>	45 minutes	20	20%
	Text A1: Non-continuous / Continuous text – e.g. underline the correct answer			
	Text A2: Non-continuous/continuous text – e.g. Matching			
	Text A3: Non-continuous/continuous text – e.g. T/ F, Ticking the correct pictures and grid filling with information from the text (information transfer)			
<b>BREAK (30 minutes)</b>				
	<b>Section B: Writing</b>	45 minutes	40	20%
	Task B1: Writing at word level with a word bank			
	Task B2: Writing at word level with a word bank			
	Task B3: Short writing task at word level without support			
	Task B4: Short writing task at sentence level without support			
	Task B5: Long writing task at paragraph level with prompts			

*Table 2: The individual components, the duration and the weighting of marks that the English Alternative Annual Exam Alternative Paper 2 carries*  
*\*Continuous Assessment of the four Language components and Literature, carried out throughout the scholastic year by the class teacher, carry 40% of the final mark.*

### 3. SPEAKING (20 MARKS – 10%) (8 MINUTES)

The **Speaking Exam**, which should take roughly 8 minutes, is a face-to-face test with one student, an oral examiner and if possible, an interlocutor.

The Alternative Paper 1 Speaking Exam consists of three tasks. For Task 1, students can come prepared. In this task, students talk about themselves with the help of prompts. In Task 2, as indicated in Checklist 1, students will be asked to express basic needs. Prompts and / or visuals might be given to help the students. In Task 3, as indicated in Checklist 1, students will be asked a few questions to talk about a picture.

Similarly, the Alternative Paper 2 Speaking Exam consists of three tasks. For Task 1, students can come prepared. In this task, students talk about themselves with the help of prompts. In Task 2, as indicated in Checklist 2, students will be asked to express needs and feelings. Prompts and / or visuals might be given to help the students. In Task 3, as indicated in Checklist 2, students will be asked to relate a story in response to a set of pictures.

The Interlocutor and Examiner are to follow the procedure indicated on the Interlocutor and Examiner’s Paper, should not improvise and are to refer closely to the Marking Criteria to arrive at a fair and reliable assessment of the students’ ability to use spoken English. For ease of reference, an exemplar of the Marking Criteria to be used for the speaking tasks can be found on page 11 of this document. As outlined in the Marking Criteria for Speaking and as stipulated in the LOF Supporting Document for Level 5 (2019–2020), **accuracy** and **spoken grammar** as well as other criteria including **fluency** and **interaction**, **vocabulary**, **content and relevance** and **pronunciation** are to be assessed through speaking.

ALTERNATIVE PAPER 1							
Part	Task	Format	Lexical Area	No. of questions	Resources needed	Duration	Mark
Task 1	<b>Describing oneself</b>	Students give information of a personal kind. Students come prepared to introduce and describe themselves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal identification</li> <li>• Feelings and emotions</li> <li>• Relationships</li> <li>• Hobbies and Leisure</li> <li>• Entertainment</li> <li>• Celebrations</li> <li>• Personal stories and adventures</li> <li>• Weather and natural disasters</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Town and Country</li> <li>• Travel</li> <li>• Communication and technology</li> <li>• Shopping and services</li> </ul>	3-4	Prompt Card to be used by Examiner	2 minutes	5 marks
Task 2	<b>Expressing basic needs</b>	Students might be given visuals / prompts to express basic needs.		3-4	Prompts / Visuals	2 minutes	5 marks
Task 3	<b>Visual Prompt</b>	Students describe a picture based on one visual prompt which could include photos, adverts, invitations, maps, and menus.		5-7	Visual Prompt Word Bank	4 minutes	10 marks

*Table 3: Summary of the Speaking Exam for Alternative Paper 1*

### **Speaking Task 1: Describing Oneself (5 marks)**

This task tests students' ability to introduce and describe oneself. The student is asked to introduce him/herself. The student can come prepared for this part of the exam. A prompt card will be available for the Examiner/Interlocutor to follow for prompting in case the student is unable to sustain this task. For further guidance, students will also be given a prompt card with sentence stems which they can refer to during the exam. If students need help reading the stems, the examiner / interlocutor may read them out for the student. Please refer to the Specimen Paper for an exemplar prompt card.

### **Speaking Task 2: Expressing Basic Needs (5 marks)**

As indicated in Checklist 1, the second task assesses students' ability to express their basic needs. It might consist of prompts (which may be visual) based on the themes identified in the table above and as stipulated in the LOF Supporting Document for Year 4. Please refer to the Specimen Paper for exemplar questions.

### **Speaking Task 3: Visual Prompt (10 marks)**

The third and final task consists of a Visual Prompt based on ONE of the themes identified in the table above and as stipulated in the LOF Supporting Document for Year 4. This task assesses students' ability to respond to basic questions and talk about pictures as required in Checklist 1. This task requires the use of language to describe characters, scenes, objects and pictures. A word bank will be available for the student to follow and use during this task.

	REFERENCE TO CHECKLIST 1 & YEAR 4 LOS	EXEMPLAR QUESTIONS
1.	LS 5.5 I can describe characters, scenes, objects and pictures.	<i>Who can you see in this picture?</i>
2.	LS 5.5 I can respond to questions about a text	<i>Where are the children?</i> <i>What are they doing?</i>

*Table 4: Exemplar questions to be asked during Speaking exam of Alternative Paper 1 as stipulated in the Year 4 LOs and Checklist 1*

ALTERNATIVE PAPER 2							
Part	Task	Format	Lexical Area	No. of questions	Resources needed	Duration	Mark
Task 1	<b>Describing oneself</b>	Students give information of a personal kind. Students come prepared to introduce and describe themselves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal identification</li> <li>• Feelings and emotions</li> <li>• Relationships</li> <li>• Hobbies and Leisure</li> <li>• Entertainment</li> <li>• Celebrations</li> </ul>	3-4	Prompt Card to be used by Examiner	2 minutes	5 marks
Task 2	<b>Expressing needs and feelings</b>	Students might be given visuals / prompts to express needs and feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal stories and adventures</li> <li>• Weather and natural disasters</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Town and Country</li> <li>• Travel</li> <li>• Communication and technology</li> </ul>	3-4	Prompts / Visuals	2 minutes	5 marks
Task 3	<b>Picture Story</b>	Students relate a story in response to a set of pictures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shopping and services</li> </ul>	5-7	Picture Story Word Bank	4 minutes	10 marks

*Table 5: Summary of the Speaking Exam for Alternative Paper 2*

### **Speaking Task 1: Describing Oneself (5 marks)**

This task tests students' ability to introduce and describe oneself. The student is asked to introduce him/herself. The student can come prepared for this part of the exam. A prompt card will be available for the Examiner/Interlocutor to follow for prompting in case the student is unable to sustain this task. For further guidance, students will be given sentence stems which they can refer to during the exam. If students need help reading the stems, the examiner / interlocutor may read them out for the student. Please refer to the Specimen Paper for an exemplar prompt card.

### **Speaking Task 2: Expressing Needs and Feelings (5 marks)**

As indicated in Checklist 2, the second task assesses students' ability to express their needs and feelings. It might consist of prompts (which may be visual) based on the themes identified in the table above and as stipulated in the LOF Supporting Document for Year 4. Please refer to the Specimen Paper for exemplar questions.

### **Speaking Task 3: Picture Story (10 marks)**

The third task consists of a Picture Story based on ONE of the themes identified in the table on page 5 and as stipulated in the LOF Supporting Document for Year 4. This task assesses students' ability to relate a story about a set of pictures as indicated in Checklist 2. This task requires the use of language to describe characters, scenes, objects and pictures, recount as well as respond to *wh*-questions as stipulated in the LOF Supporting Document for Year 4. A word bank will be available for the student to follow and use during this task. A prompt card will be available for the Examiner/Interlocutor to follow for prompting in case the student is unable to sustain this task.

	REFERENCE TO YEAR 4 LOS	EXEMPLAR QUESTIONS
1.	LS 5.5 I can describe characters, scenes, objects and pictures.	<b><i>What can you see in these pictures?</i></b>
2.	LS 5.5 I can respond to questions about a text	<b><i>Where do you think the story is taking place?</i></b>
3.	LS 5.7 I can organise my ideas and describe them effectively.	<b><i>What do you think happened? Tell me the story.</i></b>

*Table 6: Exemplar questions to be asked during Speaking exam of Alternative Paper 2 as stipulated in the Year 4 LOs and Learning Outcomes Checklist 2*

#### 4. LISTENING (20 MARKS – 10%) (30 MINUTES)

The **Listening Examination** in Alternative Paper 1 and Alternative Paper 2, the content of which will be different to the mainstream Listening examination, assesses the students' ability to demonstrate understanding of audio/audio visual texts across a range of genres, follow oral instructions and directions and use comprehension skills to respond appropriately. The Listening Examination could be an audio and/or an audio-visual text recorded and provided to schools through the Educational Assessment Unit (EAU), instructions for which will be given. The Listening Exam should last 30 minutes.

There will be **TWO** listening tasks for Alternative Paper 1 and Alternative Paper 2:

- **Task 1:** The first task consists of a short audio or audio-visual text of about 1 minute in length. This might include an announcement; an advert; instructions; directions; a weather report; or a description of a person, object or place.
- **Task 2:** The second task consists of an audio or an audio-visual text of about 3 minutes long. This might include a monologue; a dialogue; a news bulletin or a short story.

In each of the two tasks, students might be asked to:

- tick pictures, label pictures or simple diagrams;
- write words, numbers, dates or time in gaps;
- mark a statement as True or False;
- underline, circle, or tick the correct answer;
- match;
- and complete grids with information.

**THE LISTENING COMPREHENSION PROCEDURE**  
for ALTERNATIVE PAPER 1 & ALTERNATIVE PAPER 2

<b>TASK 1: Time allocated</b>	<b>Procedure</b>	<b>TASK 2: Time allocated</b>	<b>Procedure</b>
2 minutes	Students read the questions.	3 minutes	Students read the questions.
1 minute	Students listen to the audio-text/watch the audio-visual text and may begin to work out the task/s as they listen.	3 minutes	Students listen to the audio-text/watch the audio-visual text and may begin to work out the task/s as they listen.
2 minutes	Students listen to the questions and answer as they listen.	4 minutes	Students listen to the questions and answer as they listen.
1 minute	Students listen to the audio-text/watch the audio-visual text for a second time.	3 minutes	Students listen to the audio-text/watch the audio-visual text for a second time.
2 minutes	Students listen to the questions for a second time and complete the task/s as they listen.	4 minutes	Students listen to the questions for a second time and complete the task/s as they listen.
2 minutes	Students are allowed some time to check their answers.	3 minutes	Students are allowed some time to check their answers of Task 1 and Task 2.
10 minutes		20 minutes	

*Table 7: The Listening Examination Procedure for Alternative Paper 1 and Alternative Paper 2*

## **5. READING (20 MARKS – 20%) (45 MINUTES) AND WRITING (40 MARKS – 20%) (45 MINUTES)**

### **Section A: READING COMPREHENSION (20 marks – 20%) (45 MINUTES)**

Students will be given 3 or 4 reading comprehension tasks in Alternative Paper 1 and Alternative Paper 2, the texts of which can be continuous or non-continuous. The tasks aim to assess the students' ability to understand different texts and use a range of comprehension strategies as specified by the LOF Supporting Document for Year 4, Checklist 1 and Checklist 2.

The topic of each text would be related to the topics identified in the LOF Supporting Document for Year 4 (p.27). The texts, which may or may not be related to each other, can be one of the following: picture/s with / without a caption/s; a diagram or picture or set of pictures with some text; notice/s; simple timetables and schedules, short texts such as tickets, receipts, messages, signs, posters, invitations; instructions or directions; extract from a newsletter / magazine / website; advertisements and blurbs.

Students might be asked to carry out any of the following tasks: underlining; circling; ticking the correct answer; matching; marking a statement as True or False; writing words / phrases, dates, time or numbers in gaps; completing grids with information (information transfer); sequencing; labelling pictures or simple diagrams and producing short-answer responses.

Although students will not be penalised for punctuation, spelling and grammatical errors in questions requiring constructed responses, teachers should still encourage students to write legibly and accurately.

### **Section B: WRITING (40 marks – 20%) (45 minutes)**

In this part of the exam, students sitting for Alternative Paper 1 and students sitting for Alternative Paper 2 are to complete 5 graded writing tasks which assess writing at word, sentence and paragraph level. Conventions of spelling, punctuation, and grammar apply in all writing tasks and will be assessed accordingly. Students are awarded marks for their ability to communicate ideas/information clearly, fluently, accurately, effectively and relevantly. An example of the Marking Criteria that may be used for each of the writing tasks can be found on page 12 of this document. The actual Marking Criteria specifically relevant to the Short or Long Writing Tasks will be provided with the Marking Scheme document of the Alternative Papers.

## Writing Task 1 and Writing Task 2

In the first two tasks, there will be a focus on a particular language structure in context which is authentic, age- and level-appropriate. For instance, students might be asked to fill in a recipe with the missing verbs or complete directions with the missing linking words. A word bank will be given for support in both tasks.

## Writing Task 3 and Writing Task 4

In the next short writing task, students will be assessed on writing single words in context. Word banks will not be given in this task but visual support will be given. Students might be asked to write lists, or fill in the gaps in a text such as letters / emails.

In the fourth writing task, students will be asked to write ONE short writing task at sentence level and will NOT be given a choice. This task might include one or more from the following genres as stated in the LOF Supporting Document for Level 5:

fill in a form	invitation	message / note	caption/s
----------------	------------	----------------	-----------

Table 8: List of writing genres of short writing tasks for Alternative Paper 1 and Alternative Paper 2

## Writing Task 5

In the fifth and final writing task, students are expected to write a paragraph. Students are given two titles of the same genre to choose ONE. The genre of these two tasks would be the same but the audience, purpose and lexical area might be different. Possible text types for the long writing task include procedural, informative, descriptive, and narrative. These may include the following genres as indicated in the LOF Supporting Document for Level 5:

a short story	a recount	poster
instructions	directions	postcard

Table 9: List of writing genre of long writing tasks for Alternative Paper 1 and Alternative Paper 2

Space for planning is given as well as prompts to guide the students in their writing. Students are encouraged to write detailed and organised plans to help guide their writing. However, plans carry no marks but are simply there to help the students organise their ideas.

The criteria assessed in the writing task include relevance and task achievement, organisation and structure, cohesion and coherence, vocabulary, language use and spelling and punctuation as indicated by the LOs in the Supporting Document and in the Marking Criteria in Table 11 on page 12 of this document. Students are encouraged to produce a piece of writing of between 30–50 words in Alternative Paper 1 and around 50–70 words in Alternative Paper 2. If students do not adhere to the word limit, they will not be penalised for it.

**SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT – SPEAKING**
**20 MARKS**

	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Fluency and Interaction</b>	Can communicate and interact more fully and with some pauses and hesitations which do not interfere with comprehension.	Can speak slowly, using hesitation to rephrase and search for vocabulary.	Communication is inadequate and speech is very often affected by repetitions, pauses and self-correction.
	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Can use a wide range of vocabulary and phrases to be more specific in expressing meaning appropriate to the context.	Can use basic vocabulary and phrases related to everyday objects, activities, and people.	Uses a very limited range or inappropriate vocabulary to talk about the topic.
	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Spoken grammar</b>	Can use a range of grammatical structures and construct simple and complex sentence structures linked with a range of connectors.	Can use basic grammatical structures and construct simple sentence structures.	Shows insufficient control of simple grammatical forms and structures are all inaccurate.
	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Content and Relevance</b>	Task is achieved in full.  Reply is relevant.	Task is partially achieved.  Choice of utterances are relevant.	Task is not achieved.  Choice of utterances are irrelevant.
	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Pronunciation, intonation and stress</b>	Speech is consistently clear and intelligible, using the appropriate intonation and stress to express the desired meaning.	Speech is generally clear and intelligible, with some influence of first language intonation and stress patterns, but meaning is generally achieved.	Mispronunciations in speech interfere considerably with meaning, and intonation and stress are extremely influenced by the first language.

*Table 10: An exemplar of the Marking Scheme for Speaking*

## SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT – WRITING TASK

12 MARKS

	2	1	0	
Grammar	Varied, complex and accurate grammatical structures and syntax	Grammatical structures and syntax are limited and sometimes inaccurate	Grammatical structures and syntax are inaccurate throughout	6 marks
Spelling	Accurate spelling throughout	Adequate spelling with some errors (up to 2 different mistakes)	Spelling is very poor (more than 3 different mistakes)	
Punctuation	Accurate punctuation throughout	Generally accurate use of punctuation (up to 2 different mistakes)	Inaccurate punctuation (more than 3 different mistakes)	
	2	1	0	
Coherence and Cohesion	Structured and organised writing	Paragraph and sentence structure are fairly correct	Unstructured and disorganised writing	6 marks
	Cohesive devices are varied and link together well	Cohesive devices are quite varied and generally correct	No or mistaken use of linking words or phrases	
Vocabulary	Wide-ranging and appropriate vocabulary to describe the occasion and what makes the person special	Good range and appropriate vocabulary to describe the occasion and what makes the person special	Very limited and inappropriate choice of vocabulary when describing the occasion and what makes the person special.	
	Excellent choice of expression	Good choice of expression	Poor choice of expression	
Relevance	Content is completely relevant, writing follows given instructions / rubric  Task is achieved in full	Content is irrelevant at times and writing does not always follow given instructions / rubric  Task is partially achieved	Content is irrelevant and writing does not follow given instructions / rubric  Task is not achieved	

*Table 11: An exemplar of the Marking Scheme for the Long Writing Task*

*For more information or queries, kindly contact:*

*Pamela Zerafa, Education Officer (English): [pamela.zerafa@ilearn.edu.mt](mailto:pamela.zerafa@ilearn.edu.mt)*

*Urieth Attard (HoD English Primary): [urieth.aquilina@ilearn.edu.mt](mailto:urieth.aquilina@ilearn.edu.mt)*

*Mary Jude Camilleri (HoD English Primary): [mary.jude.camilleri@ilearn.edu.mt](mailto:mary.jude.camilleri@ilearn.edu.mt)*

---

**END OF DOCUMENT**

---