

English Annual Examination Guidelines

YEAR 4

(2019-2020)

UPDATED

1. INTRODUCTION

The English Annual Examinations – Year 4 (2020) targets aspects of language learning that are reflected in the assessment criteria set by the Learning Outcomes Framework (2012) and the LOF Supporting Document for Year 4 (2019-2020).

The English Annual examination assesses 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.

Literature is not included in the Annual Examination and is to be assessed throughout the year through regular continuous assessment tasks carried out by the class teacher. The Language Awareness and Production component, which should be taught implicitly and in a context in the classroom, has been removed from the examination but is still assessed through the productive skills of speaking and writing.

2. THE ENGLISH ANNUAL EXAMINATION IN YEAR 4

The English Examination Paper consists of four components: **Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing**. Table 1 below shows the individual components, the duration and the weighting of marks each carry. The **Reading and Writing Exam is 1 hour 30 minutes long**, with a 30-minute break between the Reading and the Writing components. Therefore, the 45-minute long Reading Examination is to be followed by a 30-minute break, after which the students will resume the exam with 45 minutes allotted for the Writing component.

COMPONENT	DURATION	MARKS (100)	SUMMATIVE EXAM (60%)*
Speaking: Task 1: Warmer Task 2: Visual Prompt Task 3: Interview	7-8 minutes	20	10%
Listening: Text 1 (Short) (audio/audio-visual) Text 2 (Long) (audio/audio-visual)	30 minutes	20	10%
Reading: Text 1: (non-continuous/continuous) Text 2: (non-continuous/continuous)	45 minutes	30	20%
BREAK (30 MINUTES)			
Writing: Task 1: Short Task 2: Long	45 minutes	30	20%

Written Paper
1hr 30 mins +
30 mins break

Table 1: The English Year 4 Annual Exam at a glance

*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.

1. SPEAKING (20 MARKS - 10%)

The **Speaking Exam** is a face-to-face test with one student, an oral examiner and if possible, an interlocutor. The exam should take approximately 7-8 minutes. 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, the Marking Criteria to be used can be found on page 14 of this document.

As outlined in the Marking Criteria for Speaking and as stipulated in the LOF Supporting Document for Year 4 (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.

Summary of the Speaking Exam

Part	Task	Format	Lexical Area	No. of questions	Resources needed	Duration	Mark
Task 1	Warmer	Students give information of a personal kind. Students come prepared to introduce and describe themselves.	Personal Identification	1	Prompt Card	1 minute	Not assessed
Task 2	Visual Prompt	Students describe, recount and predict based on one or more visual prompts which could include photos, adverts, invitations, maps, and menus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Feelings and Emotions · Relationships · Hobbies and Leisure · Entertainment · Celebrations · Personal stories and Adventures · Weather and Natural Disasters · Environment · Town and Country · Travel · Communication and Technology · Shopping and Services 	4-5	Visual Prompt	3 minutes	10 marks
Task 3	Interview	Students narrate, express opinions and/ or persuade others through a series of wh-questions.		3-5	N/A	3 minutes	10 marks

Table 2: The English Year 4 Speaking Exam at a glance

Speaking Task 1: Warmer (Not Assessed)

Through the Warmer, the student is helped to feel at ease prior to the assessed tasks. The student is asked to introduce him/herself. Students could start by stating their name, age, the place they reside in and perhaps describe their families, friends, their homes, their school and free time activities, as well as their likes and dislikes. The student can come prepared for this part of the exam. A prompt card will be available to help the student further.

Speaking Task 2: Visual Prompt (10 marks)

The second task consists of a Visual Prompt based on ONE of the themes identified in the table on page 4 and as stipulated in the LOF Supporting Document for Year 4. This task tests students' use of language to make predictions, describe characters, scenes, objects and pictures, recount as well as respond to *wh*-questions. The following table gives exemplar questions that may appear in this part of the exam which are also pegged to their corresponding Learning Outcome.

REFERENCE TO YEAR 4 LOS

EXEMPLAR QUESTIONS

1.	LS 5.5 I can describe characters, scenes, objects and pictures.	<i>Tell me what you can see here.</i>
2.	LS 5.5 I can respond to questions about a text	<i>What was the first thing that you noticed when you saw this?</i>
3.	LS 5.7 I can organise my ideas and describe them effectively.	<i>What do you like about this? Why?</i>
4.	LS 5.5 I can make use of language to make relatively plausible predictions.	<i>This is an advert for a film. What do you think this film is about?</i>
5.	LS 5.11 I can in my own words, retell an audio or written text, ordering the main events in the correct order.	<i>Does this remind you of anything you've watched or read? Tell me about it.</i>

Table 3: The English Year 4 Speaking Exam: Task 2

Speaking Task 3: Interview (10 marks)

The third task consists of an interview during which each student is asked questions on ONE of the themes identified in the table on page 4 and as stipulated in the LOF Supporting Document for Year 4.

The following table gives exemplar questions that may appear in this part of the exam which are also pegged to their corresponding Learning Outcome.

	REFERENCE TO YEAR 4 LOS	EXEMPLAR QUESTIONS
1.	LS 5.5 I can make use of language to respond to questions.	<i>What do you prefer, watching a movie at home or at the cinema? Why?</i>
2.	LS 5.7 I can order my ideas and describe them effectively.	<i>Why do you think children need to spend more time playing outside?</i>
3.	LS 5.9 I can use appropriate language and specific vocabulary fluently when interacting with others.	<i>You are at school and during assembly the Head has invited you to convince children to exercise more. What do you tell them?</i>

Table 4: The English Year 4 Speaking Exam: Task 3

2. LISTENING (20 MARKS - 10%)

The 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 would be given. The Listening Exam should last approximately **30 minutes**.

There will be **TWO** listening tasks:

- **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; or a weather report.
- **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 description; a news bulletin or a short story.

In each of the two tasks, students might be asked to: *write words, numbers, dates or time in gaps; mark a statement as True or False; underline, circle, or tick the correct answer; match; complete grids with information; tick or label pictures or simple diagrams.*

Students listen to the recordings of both texts twice, including the questions. Table 5 below outlines the allocation of time and details of the procedure for each of the listening tasks:

	TASK 1: Time allocated	Procedure	TASK 2: Time allocated	Procedure
a)	2 minutes	Students read the questions.	3 minutes	Students read the questions.
b)	1 minute	Students listen to the text and may begin to work out the task/s as they listen.	3 minutes	Students listen to the text and may begin to work out the task/s as they listen.
c)	2 minutes	Students listen to the questions and answer as they listen.	4 minutes	Students listen to the questions and answer as they listen.
d)	1 minute	Students listen to the text for a second time.	3 minutes	Students listen to the text for a second time.
e)	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.
f)	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 5: The Listening Examination Procedure

3. READING (30 MARKS - 20%) AND WRITING (30 MARKS - 40%)

The **Reading and Writing Examination** session is **1 hour 30 minutes long** with a **30-minute break** between the Reading and the Writing components. Therefore, the procedure for the Reading and Writing Exam should be as follows:

Examination Component	Format	Duration
Reading	Text 1: Short Reading Text 2: Long Reading	45 minutes
BREAK		30 minutes
Writing	Task 1: Short Writing Task 2: Long Writing	45 minutes

Table 6: The Reading and Writing Examination Procedure

Section A: READING (30 marks - 20%)

Texts for reading comprehension tasks, which will be presented **separately** in an **Extracts Booklet**, can be continuous or non-continuous and aim to assess the students' ability to understand the text and use a range of comprehension strategies as specified by the LOF Supporting Document for Year 4. For the constructed response questions, answers need not be in full, but students need to show comprehension.

Reading Task 1

The first text, which could be continuous or non-continuous, should be approximately **60 – 80 words long**. The topic of the text would be related to one of the topics identified in the LOF Supporting Document for Year 4 (p.27). The text, which may be related to the second reading text, can be one of the following: *picture/s with a caption/s; a diagram or picture or set of pictures with some text; notice/s; simple timetables and schedules, short texts such as 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: *writing words / phrases, dates, time or numbers in gaps; underlining; circling; ticking the correct answer; matching; marking a statement as True or False; completing grids with information; sequencing; labelling pictures or simple diagrams.*

Reading Task 2

The second reading text, which could be continuous or non-continuous, could be approximately **350 – 400 words long**. Students might be asked to answer a range of questions. Tasks may include *writing words / phrases, dates, time or numbers in gaps; underlining; circling; ticking the correct answer; matching; marking a statement as True or False; completing grids with information; sequencing; labelling pictures or simple diagrams; and producing short-answer responses.*

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

Section B: WRITING (30 marks - 20%)

In this part of the exam, students are to write **one short** writing task and **one long** writing task. Possible text types for each of the writing components might include *narrative, descriptive, informative/instructive and persuasive* writing as indicated in the LOF Supporting Document for Year 4 (p.33).

Conventions of spelling, punctuation, and grammar apply in both 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 pages 16 and 17 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 Annual Paper.

Writing Task 1 (12 marks):

Students are asked to write **ONE short writing task** which might include one or more from the following genres:

caption/s;	instructions	fill in a form (e.g. an identity kit)
short email / letter	advert	invitation
message	postcard	directions

Students **will not** be given a choice in this task.

Writing Task 2 (18 marks):

In Writing Task 2, students are given a choice of two to **choose ONE**. The genre of these two tasks would be the same but the audience, purpose and lexical area might be different. These may include the following genres as indicated in the Supporting Document:

- | |
|--|
| · a short story; |
| · an informal letter / email; |
| · an information text: non-chronological report. |

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 student organise 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 for the Long Writing Task in Table 10 on page 17 of this document.

Students are encouraged to plan and produce a piece of writing of **between 70 and 100 words**, however they will not be penalised for not adhering to the word limit. The writing may be in the form of sentences or paragraphs. For both writing tasks, attention is given to the criteria outlined in the Marking Criteria found on pages 16 and 17 of this document.

Marking Criteria – SPEAKING (YEAR 4)

10 MARKS

	2	1	0
Fluency and Interaction	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.
Vocabulary	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.
Spoken grammar	Can use a range of grammatical structures and construct 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.
Content and Relevance	Task is achieved in full. Reply is relevant to the question.	Task is partially achieved. Choice of utterances are relevant to the topic.	Task is not achieved. Choice of utterances are irrelevant to the topic.
Pronunciation, intonation and stress	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 7: Marking Criteria for Speaking

Band	Mark	Descriptors
<i>Excellent</i>	18 - 20	Excellent interaction and confident use of the language. Ideas conveyed clearly through a variety of sentence structures and wide range of vocabulary . Hesitation typical of spoken language. Utterances are well extended . Pronunciation is clear throughout with the right intonation and stress.
<i>Very Good</i>	15 - 17	Interacts very well and a very good command of the language. Most ideas conveyed through a variety of sentence structures and wide range of vocabulary. Hesitation typical of spoken language. Utterances are fairly extended . Pronunciation is clear throughout with the right intonation and stress.
<i>Fairly Good To Good</i>	11 - 14	Interacts fairly well and a generally effective command of the language. Some inaccurate structures and an adequate range of vocabulary though lacking idiomatic expressions. Hesitation typical of spoken language. Utterances are of adequate length . Pronunciation is clear throughout with noticeable L1 influence .
<i>Slightly Inadequate To Pass</i>	7 - 10	Has average command of the language with some false starts . Structures are simple with some inaccuracies . An adequate range of vocabulary though limited. Hesitation occurs. Utterances are short . Pronunciation is satisfactory but with noticeable L1 influence.
<i>Weak</i>	4 – 6	Has limited command of the language with false starts. Structures are simple and mostly inaccurate . Very basic range of vocabulary . Frequently hesitates . Utterances are very short . Pronunciation hinders communication .
<i>Very Poor</i>	0 - 3	No real communication is possible and mostly unintelligible . Insufficient control of simple grammatical structures and a very limited range of appropriate vocabulary. Requires constant prompting and support. Utterances include a few isolated words .

Table 8: Holistic rating scale for Speaking to be used in conjunction with the previous criterion-based rating scale (on p.14)

Marking Criteria – SHORT WRITING TASK (YEAR 4)

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 Cohesive devices are varied and link together well	Paragraph and sentence structure are fairly correct Cohesive devices are quite varied and generally correct	Unstructured and disorganised writing No or mistaken use of linking words or phrases	6 marks
Vocabulary	Wide-ranging and appropriate vocabulary Excellent choice of expression	Good range and appropriate vocabulary Good choice of expression	Very limited and inappropriate choice of vocabulary Poor choice of expression	
Relevance	Content is completely relevant Task is achieved in full	Content is irrelevant at times Task is partially achieved	Content is irrelevant Task is not achieved	

Table 9: Marking Scheme for Short Writing Task

Marking Criteria – LONG WRITING TASK (YEAR 4)

18 MARKS

	3	2	1	0	
Grammar	Varied, complex and accurate grammatical structures	Mostly accurate grammatical structures	Grammatical structures are limited and sometimes inaccurate	Grammatical structures are inaccurate throughout	9 marks
Spelling	Accurate spelling throughout	Adequate spelling with some errors (1-4 different mistakes)	Spelling is rather poor (5-9 different mistakes)	Spelling is very poor (10 or more different mistakes)	
Punctuation	Accurate punctuation throughout	Generally accurate use of punctuation (up to 4 different mistakes)	Punctuation use is rather poor (5-9 different mistakes)	Inaccurate punctuation (10 or more different mistakes)	
	3	2	1	0	
Coherence and Cohesion	Structured and organised writing into a coherent paragraph Cohesive devices are varied and link well	Paragraph and sentence structure are fairly correct Cohesive devices are quite varied and generally correct	Paragraph and sentence structure show lack of control Cohesive devices are rather limited	Unstructured and disorganised writing No or mistaken use of linking words or phrases	9 marks
Vocabulary	Wide-ranging and appropriate vocabulary Excellent choice of expression	Good range and appropriate vocabulary Good choice of expression	Limited vocabulary and repetition of words Limited choice of expression	Very limited and inappropriate choice of vocabulary Poor choice of expression	
Task Achievement	Content is completely relevant Task is achieved in full	Content is irrelevant at times. Task is partially achieved	Content is irrelevant at times. Task is hardly achieved	Content is irrelevant Task is not achieved	

Table 10: Marking Criteria for Long Writing Task

For more information or queries, kindly contact:

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

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

Urieth Attard (HoD English Primary): urieth.aquilina@ilearn.edu.mt

END OF DOCUMENT
