

CALIBRATION – A SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITY AND CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR TO QUALITY AND FAIRNESS IN TESTING LANGUAGE SKILLS

Duong Thi Thuy Uyen, M.A.

In language testing, the standards of Quality and Fairness are of great importance because they guarantee the accurate, reliable and fair measurement of the learners' language capability. One of the elements which helps to meet these standards is calibration. Therefore, in the process of preparation and administering the test, calibration should be conducted to ensure accuracy, reliability and fairness in assessing learners' language proficiency levels.

1. INTRODUCTION

In September 2014 the School of Foreign Languages for Economics (SFLE), University of Economics, Ho Chi Minh City (UEH) was founded. In the academic year of 2015, it was the first time that UEH had an intake of eighty-four students majoring in English for Economics. The teaching staffs at the SFLE in the preparation period for this Bachelor of Arts program had worked tirelessly to design a curriculum which has met the requirements of both the Ministry of Education and the society. Up till now, the feedbacks from the students about the courses and teaching staffs are extremely positive, a fruitful result for the teachers' efforts. Currently, the great concern is on the issue of delivering tests consistently and effectively, meeting the standards of Quality and Fairness in language testing. To achieve this, calibration – an activity which has been conducted regularly in the preparation period of international tests as well as in tests at prestigious universities – should be organized before Speaking and Writing tests at SFLE so that the teachers - raters can assess the students' performance as well as their language proficiency levels in an accurate, reliable and fair way.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The standards of Quality and Fairness

The standards of Quality and Fairness were developed and are periodically revised by Educational Testing Service (ETS), known as ETS Standards for Quality and Fairness. The aims are to support in designing, developing, and delivering technically sound, fair, accessible, and useful products and services, and to help to evaluate those products and services. They are “*a model for organizations throughout the world that seek to implement measurement standards aligned with changes in technology and advances in measurement and education.*” (Walt M., ETS Standards for Quality and Fairness, 2015:1)

There are thirteen standards which are sub-divided into many detailed ones. These individual standards provide detailed guidelines, standard operating procedures, work rules, checklists, and so on. The Standard 10.1 - Developing Procedures for Human Scoring – proposes that: “*If the scoring involves human judgment, develop clear, complete, and understandable procedures and criteria for scoring, and train the raters to apply them consistently and correctly.*” (ETS Standards for Quality and Fairness, 2015:43)

It also clarifies that training for raters is needed to ascertain that they can apply the scoring rubric consistently and correctly. Benchmarks (responses typical of different levels of performance at each score point) should be included in training sessions and an array of examples should be used to help the raters have a clear understanding about the intended scoring standards. Besides, expert raters should be available to assist when a rater has difficulty rating a response. (ETS Standards for Quality and Fairness, 2015:43)

The second standard in this set - Standard 10.2 - Monitoring Accuracy and Reliability of Scoring – points out that: “*If the rating process requires judgment, the accuracy of ratings can best be judged by comparing them with ratings assigned to the same responses by expert raters.*” (ETS Standards for Quality and Fairness, 2015:43)

As far as the standard of Fairness is concerned, in the Manual for Language Test Development and Examining produced by the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) on behalf of Language Policy Division, Council of Europe, it is emphasized that three aspects of fairness should be acknowledged. They are “*fairness as lack of bias, fairness as equitable treatment in the testing process and fairness as equality in outcomes of testing.*” (Manual for Language Test Development and Examining, 2011:17)

This manual also gives instructions on having good quality control. To meet the Standards for Quality, it claims that besides considering many related elements such as editing, piloting, pretesting and trialing, etc., the process of marking must be managed to avoid any threatening to reliability and accuracy. Therefore, raters or examiners have to be trained so that they can rate consistently and accurately, especially when “*a single ‘correct answer’ cannot be clearly prescribed by the exam provider before rating*” (Manual for Language Test Development and Examining, 2011:41). Before the rater training sessions, a rating scale must be constructed. This is “*a set of descriptors which describes performances at different levels, showing which mark or grade each performance level should receive.*” (Manual for Language Test Development and Examining, 2011:41). Then in the training sessions, samples and the rating scale are used for open discussion after independent rating is done.

2.2 Calibration

In the online dictionary (<http://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/calibrate>), the word *calibrate* means making precise measurement. In the glossary compiled by ETS, it is defined as follows:

“In the scoring of a constructed-response test, “calibration” refers to the process of checking to make sure that each scorer is applying the scoring standards correctly.”

(from https://www.ets.org/understanding_testing/glossary/)

In the process of developing and delivering tests, calibration is just a small but important step to ensure fair and reliable rating. Calibrations are conducted in scorer / rater training sessions. According to the Guidelines for the Assessment of English Language Learners, also published by ETS, a review of how to interpret responses and the scoring rubric should be included in scorer training. Assessment developers should select various-score-point exemplar responses and use them in training raters so that raters can “*recognize English Language Learner (ELL) characteristics and score ELL responses fairly without introducing bias*”. Besides, it states that “*Recalibrating scorers at the beginning of each scoring session should confirm scorers’ abilities to resume accurate scoring.*” (Guidelines for the Assessment of English Language Learners, 2009: 29)

3. METHODOLOGY

To learn about the process of training raters to ensure accuracy and fairness, informal interviews were conducted with Ms. Ton Nu Ngoc Tuong, the Country Test Manager, International Developing Program (IDP) Viet Nam, which organizes IELTS (International English Language Testing System) tests and Dr. Nguyen Thi Cam Le, the main class English teacher for English Proficiency Program (EPP) from English Language Institute, School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. Dr. Le is also the Representative and Manager for the EPP program of Victoria University of Wellington at Ho Chi Minh City campus, administering English Proficiency Test (EPT) which has been developed and standardized by English Language Institute, School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.

Interviews were also conducted with three IELTS examiners at IDP Viet Nam who have had regular retraining from British Council and IDP: IELTS Australia through the Professional Support Network.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Steps in calibration and differences in training sessions

The two managers, Ms. Tuong and Dr. Le, gave almost the same information on the process of training raters as well as calibrations for Speaking and Writing tests. Generally, all the steps are the same in calibration sessions. First, the raters are given band descriptors to study and the trainer will give some explanation if necessary. Then sample answers – video clips recorded students’ answers for the Speaking test - are shown; or students’ graph and essay writing paper – are delivered (usually five sample answers for each kind of test) for the raters to mark. After that, each rater will explain why they come up to the scores. Then there is an open discussion among the raters before they compare their ratings with the ones assigned to the same responses by expert raters. In the end, another discussion is conducted to come to the final concurrence.

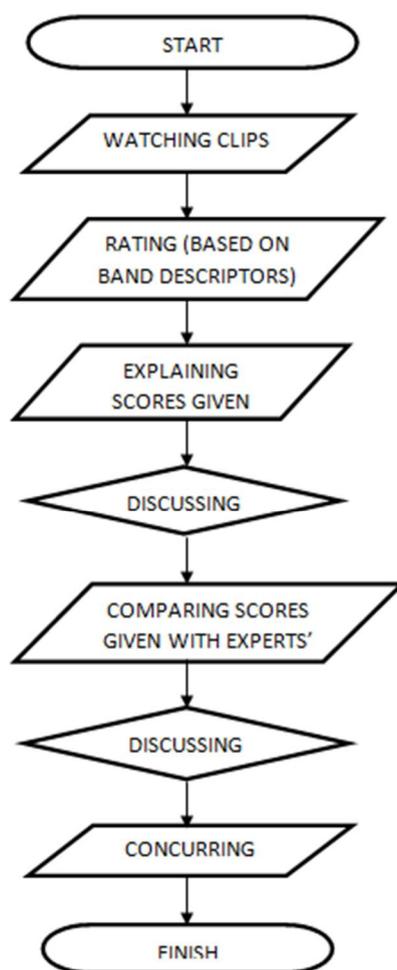


Figure 1. Flow chart of steps in a calibration for a speaking test

There is a small difference in the frequency of the training sessions organized at the two organizations. IDP Vietnam requires the examiners for IELTS tests to have training and retraining in standardization sessions which were held every two years in the past and are now held every year, led by examiner trainers. Meanwhile, the raters for the Speaking and Writing tests at the English Language Institute, School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies attend calibrations before the English proficiency tests that are delivered three times a year and led by the Dean of the School.

As far as the band descriptors are concerned, for copyright reason, Dr. Le and Ms. Tuong just gave general information about them. However, public versions of assessment criteria for Speaking and Writing in IELTS tests can be found on the Internet, available at www.ielts.org (see Appendixes). In comparison, the band descriptors for Speaking and Writing tests in IELTS have four criteria while the ones in EPT have five. (These criteria are equally weighted). Another difference is IELTS has a nine-band scale while EPT band score is of 6.

Table 1. The differences between IELTS test and EPT test

	<i>IELTS test</i>	<i>EPT test</i>
1. Number of criterion areas for Speaking and Writing tests	04	05
2. The range of band scale	01 - 09	01 - 06
3. Scoring system	Whole or half band scores	Whole band scores

4.2 Difficulties in preparing samples for calibrations

According to Dr. Le, making samples for calibration is not a simple task. Two major problems need considering and finding solutions for. For Speaking tests, because of ethical reasons, firstly, it needs the students' agreement in making video recordings and using them in calibrations for Speaking tests afterwards. Secondly, it is time-consuming and costly to make these video clips. In addition, it is quite difficult to arrange calibrations for the expert raters to score the samples before calibrations for raters due to their different availability.

Besides, reality shows that there is an issue coming from teachers – raters themselves when they sometimes cannot come to an agreement on a student's score even though they have referred to the band descriptors already. Fortunately, this case does rarely happen.

4.3 Benefits of calibrations

The outcomes from the interviews with the two managers and three examiners revealed that from both the managers' and raters' points of views, the calibration is a significant activity and contributory factor to the quality and fairness in language testing. The reason is after being trained and retrained with calibrations, raters can carry out consistent assessment and give accurate rating because they are “*appropriately qualified and have the relevant professional experience*” (Ensuring Quality and Fairness in International Language Testing, 2013:12). Three examiners at IDP Viet Nam, Ho Chi Minh City, when interviewed, all said that after calibrations it was much easier for them to assess candidates' proficiency levels when they knew which grades or scores should have been given for their performances.

In addition, the writer herself - being a co-teacher for the EPP - has also been trained in calibrations two or three times a year since 2008 (depending on the number of courses she has been involved in). She also shares the opinion that the rater after participating in calibrations can be more confident and make quick and definitive decisions as well as maintain high level of accuracy in scoring. It is the detailed band descriptors that help raters to avoid indecisive cases or being two minds giving a candidate a four or a five, for example, when rating.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the benefits of conducting calibrations before delivering Speaking and Writing tests, it is recommended that calibrations should be organized at the SFLE before Speaking tests delivered to the students majoring in English for Economics because they help the teachers – examiners measure the learners' language capability in an accurate, reliable and fair way.

To do this, detailed performance descriptors which describe spoken performance at each of the 10 bands should be developed first. These descriptors will help teachers – examiners understand clearly the level of performance required to attain a particular band score in each of the criterion areas. After that, teachers - examiners will undergo practicing / training to ensure that they can apply the descriptors in a valid and reliable manner.

There might be some arguments that the tests delivered at SFLE are not international tests like IELTS, TOEIC, or TOEFT, etc. and that there might not be enough resources to design band descriptors, making video recordings and conduct calibrations because SFLE is not a Language Institute. However, it cannot be denied that ensuring quality and fairness in language testing is one of the teacher's primary responsibilities, and if it is not carried out now, then when can it be? Big things cannot be achieved when small things have not been started with.

6. CONCLUSION

To sum up, to achieve the main goal set up by the President of the UEH – making UEH become one of the best international universities – each School in the university has to improve itself in every aspect and from every seem-to-be simple thing. For SFLE, it is about time that calibrations were applied to step-by-step standardize its testing system.

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SPEAKING: Band Descriptors (public version)

Band	Fluency and coherence	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy	Pronunciation
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speaks fluently with only rare repetition or self-correction; any hesitation is content-related rather than to find words or grammar speaks coherently with fully appropriate cohesive features develops topics fully and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses vocabulary with full flexibility and precision in all topics uses idiomatic language naturally and accurately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a full range of structures naturally and appropriately produces consistently accurate structures apart from 'slips' characteristic of native speaker speech 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a full range of pronunciation features with precision and subtlety sustains flexible use of features throughout is effortless to understand
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speaks fluently with only occasional repetition or self-correction; hesitation is usually content-related and only rarely to search for language develops topics coherently and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide vocabulary resource readily and flexibly to convey precise meaning uses less common and idiomatic vocabulary skilfully, with occasional inaccuracies uses paraphrase effectively as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures flexibly produces a majority of error-free sentences with only very occasional inappropriacies or basic/non-systematic errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of pronunciation features sustains flexible use of features, with only occasional lapses is easy to understand throughout; L1 accent has minimal effect on intelligibility
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speaks at length without noticeable effort or loss of coherence may demonstrate language-related hesitation at times, or some repetition and/or self-correction uses a range of connectives and discourse markers with some flexibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses vocabulary resource flexibly to discuss a variety of topics uses some less common and idiomatic vocabulary and shows some awareness of style and collocation, with some inappropriate choices uses paraphrase effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a range of complex structures with some flexibility frequently produces error-free sentences, though some grammatical mistakes persist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows all the positive features of Band 6 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 8
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is willing to speak at length, though may lose coherence at times due to occasional repetition, self-correction or hesitation uses a range of connectives and discourse markers but not always appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has a wide enough vocabulary to discuss topics at length and make meaning clear in spite of inappropriacies generally paraphrases successfully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a mix of simple and complex structures, but with limited flexibility may make frequent mistakes with complex structures though these rarely cause comprehension problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a range of pronunciation features with mixed control shows some effective use of features but this is not sustained can generally be understood throughout, though mispronunciation of individual words or sounds reduces clarity at times
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> usually maintains flow of speech but uses repetition, self correction and/or slow speech to keep going may over-use certain connectives and discourse markers produces simple speech fluently, but more complex communication causes fluency problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> manages to talk about familiar and unfamiliar topics but uses vocabulary with limited flexibility attempts to use paraphrase but with mixed success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> produces basic sentence forms with reasonable accuracy uses a limited range of more complex structures, but these usually contain errors and may cause some comprehension problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows all the positive features of Band 4 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 6
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot respond without noticeable pauses and may speak slowly, with frequent repetition and self-correction links basic sentences but with repetitious use of simple connectives and some breakdowns in coherence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is able to talk about familiar topics but can only convey basic meaning on unfamiliar topics and makes frequent errors in word choice rarely attempts paraphrase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> produces basic sentence forms and some correct simple sentences but subordinate structures are rare errors are frequent and may lead to misunderstanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a limited range of pronunciation features attempts to control features but lapses are frequent mispronunciations are frequent and cause some difficulty for the listener
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speaks with long pauses has limited ability to link simple sentences gives only simple responses and is frequently unable to convey basic message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses simple vocabulary to convey personal information has insufficient vocabulary for less familiar topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attempts basic sentence forms but with limited success, or relies on apparently memorised utterances makes numerous errors except in memorised expressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows some of the features of Band 2 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 4
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pauses lengthily before most words little communication possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> only produces isolated words or memorised utterances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot produce basic sentence forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speech is often unintelligible
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no communication possible no rateable language 			
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not attend 			

WRITING TASK 1: Band Descriptors (public version)

Band	Task achievement	Coherence and cohesion	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fully satisfies all the requirements of the task clearly presents a fully developed response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention skillfully manages paragraphing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of vocabulary with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures with full flexibility and accuracy; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> covers all requirements of the task sufficiently presents, highlights and illustrates key features/ bullet points clearly and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sequences information and ideas logically manages all aspects of cohesion well uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings skillfully uses uncommon lexical items but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation produces rare errors in spelling and/or word formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures the majority of sentences are error-free makes only very occasional errors or inappropriacies
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> covers the requirements of the task (A) presents a clear overview of main trends, differences or stages (GT) presents a clear purpose, with the tone consistent and appropriate clearly presents and highlights key features/bullet points but could be more fully extended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> logically organises information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/or word formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a variety of complex structures produces frequent error-free sentences has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses the requirements of the task (A) presents an overview with information appropriately selected (GT) presents a purpose that is generally clear; there may be inconsistencies in tone presents and adequately highlights key features/ bullet points but details may be irrelevant, inappropriate or inaccurate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical may not always use referencing clearly or appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy makes some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but they do not impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> generally addresses the task; the format may be inappropriate in places (A) recounts detail mechanically with no clear overview; there may be no data to support the description (GT) may present a purpose for the letter that is unclear at times; the tone may be variable and sometimes inappropriate presents, but inadequately covers, key features/ bullet points; there may be a tendency to focus on details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> presents information with some organisation but there may be a lack of overall progression makes inadequate, inaccurate or over-use of cohesive devices may be repetitive because of lack of referencing and substitution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a limited range of vocabulary, but this is minimally adequate for the task may make noticeable errors in spelling and/or word formation that may cause some difficulty for the reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only a limited range of structures attempts complex sentences but these tend to be less accurate than simple sentences may make frequent grammatical errors and punctuation may be faulty; errors can cause some difficulty for the reader
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attempts to address the task but does not cover all key features/bullet points; the format may be inappropriate (GT) fails to clearly explain the purpose of the letter; the tone may be inappropriate may confuse key features/bullet points with detail; parts may be unclear, irrelevant, repetitive or inaccurate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> presents information and ideas but these are not arranged coherently and there is no clear progression in the response uses some basic cohesive devices but these may be inaccurate or repetitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only basic vocabulary which may be used repetitively or which may be inappropriate for the task has limited control of word formation and/or spelling; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> errors may cause strain for the reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only a very limited range of structures with only rare use of subordinate clauses some structures are accurate but errors predominate, and punctuation is often faulty
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fails to address the task, which may have been completely misunderstood presents limited ideas which may be largely irrelevant/repetitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not organise ideas logically may use a very limited range of cohesive devices, and those used may not indicate a logical relationship between ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only a very limited range of words and expressions with very limited control of word formation and/or spelling errors may severely distort the message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attempts sentence forms but errors in grammar and punctuation predominate and distort the meaning
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> answer is barely related to the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has very little control of organisational features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses an extremely limited range of vocabulary; essentially no control of word formation and/or spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot use sentence forms except in memorised phrases
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> answer is completely unrelated to the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fails to communicate any message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> can only use a few isolated words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot use sentence forms at all
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not attend does not attempt the task in any way writes a totally memorised response 			

WRITING TASK 2: Band Descriptors (public version)

Band	Task response	Coherence and cohesion	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fully addresses all parts of the task presents a fully developed position in answer to the question with relevant, fully extended and well supported ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention skilfully manages paragraphing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of vocabulary with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures with full flexibility and accuracy; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sufficiently addresses all parts of the task presents a well-developed response to the question with relevant, extended and supported ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sequences information and ideas logically manages all aspects of cohesion well uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings skilfully uses uncommon lexical items but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation produces rare errors in spelling and/or word formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures the majority of sentences are error-free makes only very occasional errors or inappropriacies
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses all parts of the task presents a clear position throughout the response presents, extends and supports main ideas, but there may be a tendency to over-generalise and/or supporting ideas may lack focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> logically organises information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use presents a clear central topic within each paragraph 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/or word formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a variety of complex structures produces frequent error-free sentences has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses all parts of the task although some parts may be more fully covered than others presents a relevant position although the conclusions may become unclear or repetitive presents relevant main ideas but some may be inadequately developed/unclear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical may not always use referencing clearly or appropriately uses paragraphing, but not always logically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy makes some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but they do not impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses the task only partially; the format may be inappropriate in places expresses a position but the development is not always clear and there may be no conclusions drawn presents some main ideas but these are limited and not sufficiently developed; there may be irrelevant detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> presents information with some organisation but there may be a lack of overall progression makes inadequate, inaccurate or over-use of cohesive devices may be repetitive because of lack of referencing and substitution may not write in paragraphs, or paragraphing may be inadequate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a limited range of vocabulary, but this is minimally adequate for the task may make noticeable errors in spelling and/or word formation that may cause some difficulty for the reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only a limited range of structures attempts complex sentences but these tend to be less accurate than simple sentences may make frequent grammatical errors and punctuation may be faulty; errors can cause some difficulty for the reader
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> responds to the task only in a minimal way or the answer is tangential; the format may be inappropriate presents a position but this is unclear presents some main ideas but these are difficult to identify and may be repetitive, irrelevant or not well supported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> presents information and ideas but these are not arranged coherently and there is no clear progression in the response uses some basic cohesive devices but these may be inaccurate or repetitive may not write in paragraphs or their use may be confusing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only basic vocabulary which may be used repetitively or which may be inappropriate for the task has limited control of word formation and/or spelling; errors may cause strain for the reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only a very limited range of structures with only rare use of subordinate clauses some structures are accurate but errors predominate, and punctuation is often faulty
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not adequately address any part of the task does not express a clear position presents few ideas, which are largely undeveloped or irrelevant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not organise ideas logically may use a very limited range of cohesive devices, and those used may not indicate a logical relationship between ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only a very limited range of words and expressions with very limited control of word formation and/or spelling errors may severely distort the message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attempts sentence forms but errors in grammar and punctuation predominate and distort the meaning
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> barely responds to the task does not express a position may attempt to present one or two ideas but there is no development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has very little control of organisational features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses an extremely limited range of vocabulary; essentially no control of word formation and/or spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot use sentence forms except in memorised phrases
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> answer is completely unrelated to the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fails to communicate any message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> can only use a few isolated words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot use sentence forms at all
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not attend does not attempt the task in any way writes a totally memorised response 			