

# Integrated Skills in English (ISE)

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## Specifications – Speaking & Listening

### ISE A1 to ISE III

Charity number England & Wales: 1014792

Charity number Scotland: SC049143

Patron: HRH The Duke of Kent KG

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Published by Trinity College London

Online edition, September 2023

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## General introduction

### About Trinity College London

Trinity College London is a leading internationally recognised awarding organisation and independent education charity that has been providing assessments around the world since 1877. We specialise in the assessment of communicative and performance skills covering music, drama, combined arts and English language. With over 850,000 candidates a year in more than 60 countries worldwide, Trinity qualifications are specifically designed to help students progress. Our aim is to inspire teachers and candidates through the creation of assessments that are enjoyable to prepare, rewarding to teach and that develop the skills needed in everyday life.

At the heart of Trinity's work is the belief that effective communicative and performance skills are life enhancing, know no boundaries and should be within reach of us all. We exist to promote and foster the best possible communicative and performance skills through assessment, content and training that is innovative, personal and authentic.

### Why choose Trinity?

Teachers and students choose Trinity because:

- ▶ we understand the transformative power of performance
- ▶ our qualifications help candidates make progress in their language learning by providing carefully levelled stepping stones that build confidence and enjoyment while continuing to extend and challenge
- ▶ we aim to design assessments that have a positive impact on student learning, engagement and achievement
- ▶ we encourage candidates to bring their own choices and interests into our exams – this motivates students and makes the assessment more relevant and enjoyable
- ▶ our flexible exams give candidates the opportunity to perform to their strengths and interests
- ▶ our qualifications are accessible to candidates of all ages and from all cultures
- ▶ our highly qualified and friendly examiners are trained to put candidates at their ease and provide maximum encouragement.

### About Trinity's English language exams

Trinity's exams in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) are organised into four suites. These share a common philosophy, but provide learners with the opportunity to choose a qualification which most suits their individual needs.

International ESOL exams – available worldwide:

- ▶ Integrated Skills in English (ISE) exams (this document\*)
- ▶ Graded Examinations in Spoken English (GESE).

UK ESOL exams – available in the UK only:

- ▶ ESOL Step 1 and Step 2 exams
- ▶ ESOL Skills for Life exams.

Trinity has been setting standards and testing English for speakers of other languages for more than 80 years. Our qualifications are accepted by universities and employers worldwide.

### About International ESOL qualifications

International ESOL qualifications are designed for candidates who are not native speakers of English and who wish to achieve a high quality, internationally recognised qualification in English that is available and recognised worldwide. International ESOL qualifications are designed to correspond to the descriptions of language proficiency in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) developed by the Council of Europe (Language Policy Division). The levels in the CEFR have been mapped to the levels in the qualifications framework (see *Pathways to Proficiency: the alignment of language proficiency scales for assessing competence in English language* DFES/QCA, 2003).

\* This specifications document covers the Speaking & Listening module of ISE A1, ISE Foundation and ISE I to III. The specifications document for Reading & Writing is available separately. ISE IV has a different format – see [trinitycollege.com/ISEIV](http://trinitycollege.com/ISEIV).

### Introduction to Integrated Skills in English (ISE) exams

Trinity's Integrated Skills in English (ISE) exams assess all four language skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening. In the two modules of the exam, the skills are tested both individually and together. This integrated approach reflects how skills are used in real-life settings.

The main features of the ISE exam are:

#### **Builds real-life communication skills**

Preparing for ISE develops relevant, real-life English language skills and transferable communication skills that students need for study and employability.

#### **Tests integrated skills in English**

ISE reflects how people use English in real life, by testing the candidates' ability to use reading and writing skills and speaking and listening skills in an integrated way.

#### **Discussion with an expert speaker**

The Speaking & Listening exam includes authentic, personalised, one-to-one discussion tasks with a Trinity examiner, based on the candidates' own experiences, interests and opinions.

#### **Feedback on student performance**

Trinity is unique in providing teachers with detailed post-exam feedback on candidate performance, in the form of diagnostic information and a teacher support session.

### Integrated skills assessment – structure of the qualification

ISE is taken in two modules – Reading & Writing and Speaking & Listening. Once the two modules have been passed at the same level, a certificate for the full qualification is awarded.

The four skills are assessed both independently and in an integrated way:

Module	Component	Method
Reading & Writing	Long reading	Reading a single text and short questions
	Multi-text reading	Reading three or four shorter texts and short questions
	Reading into writing	Reading texts and producing a short piece of writing using the texts as source material
	Extended writing	A short piece of writing similar to the kind of writing done in school or college
Speaking & Listening	Integrated speaking and listening	A phased speaking exam including discussion of a topic, a conversation and a collaborative task (depending on the level)
	Independent listening	Listening to one or more recordings and showing understanding by answering questions or by reporting information either on paper or orally. At higher levels, candidates also discuss the content with the examiner.

## The objective of Integrated Skills in English

The objective of ISE is to provide evidence of candidates' proficiency across four skills in English language. The four skills are reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Candidates may use an ISE qualification as evidence of their English language ability across all levels of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), levels A1 to C2. The CEFR outlines four test domains. The CEFR test domains are educational, occupational, public and private. ISE has been designed primarily for the educational domain and the design of the exam is suitable for any candidate (young person or adult) either in or entering into an educational context.

The qualification can be used for a range of purposes including:

- ▮ entrance to university where a specified level in English is required for study
- ▮ progression to a higher level of English study
- ▮ preparation for further or higher education, where English-medium teaching or Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) methodology may be in use
- ▮ to provide proof of language level to employers
- ▮ for immigration purposes where a specified language level is required for a visa.

## Intended candidature

The exam is set in the educational domain within the learning training context where the aim is to acquire specific knowledge and skills (CEFR – Council of Europe, 2001, page 15).

The intended candidates are young people or adults, typically at school or college, who are using English as a second or foreign language as part of their studies in order to develop their skills and improve their knowledge of a range of subject areas. The candidates taking ISE A1 may be as young as 10 years old and have been studying English in school for a year or so.

These young people and adults take ISE to gain access to further education contexts like diplomas, degrees or qualifications that are relevant to their professional development. Therefore the exam texts reflect the real-life texts which the candidates would expect to encounter at school or college. The exam tasks also reflect the real-life language use context, ie the kind of activities the candidates might do as part of their studies at school or college, or tasks which would support and develop those activities.

## Recognition of Trinity ISE exams

ISE is currently recognised by a wide range of bodies including universities, employers and UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), part of the Home Office. For a full list of bodies recognising the ISE qualification, please refer to [trinitycollege.com/ISE](http://trinitycollege.com/ISE).

## Recognition of prior learning

Students do not need to have taken any prior exams in order to take any level of ISE Speaking & Listening. Entry for a higher level of ISE does not require candidates to have passed lower levels and candidates may enter at the level they feel is appropriate for their needs and experience.

Students are not required to have any specific prior knowledge, skills or understanding in order to take an ISE exam but it is recommended that candidates enter at the level appropriate to their level of English proficiency.

### Introduction to the ISE Speaking & Listening exam

ISE Speaking & Listening exams are communicative and performance-based exams which assess speaking and listening skills in ways which are relevant and authentic to the candidates' circumstances and purpose for learning English.

### ISE levels and the CEFR

ISE A1 to ISE III align with the levels of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001) as follows:

ISE level	CEFR level
ISE A1	A1
ISE Foundation	A2
ISE I	B1
ISE II	B2
ISE III	C1

For full information on the can-do statements and language functions targeted at each level, please see the task specifications and sample exams later on in this document.

All tasks in each ISE level are linked to and reflect a particular CEFR level. The candidates, in conjunction with the ISE rating scales, can see the extent to which they have achieved a particular CEFR level.

Please note that several scores are given during the exam, using different scoring methods.

Please refer to the section 'How is ISE Speaking & Listening assessed?' for more complete information on how overall scores are reached.

### How is the Speaking & Listening exam delivered?

- ▶ The tasks are conducted as one-to-one, oral interviews between one candidate and one examiner.
- ▶ The tasks become more demanding and are longer from ISE A1 to ISE III.
- ▶ The speaking tasks replicate real-life exchanges, in which the candidate and the examiner share information, ideas and opinions and debate topical issues.
- ▶ The Independent listening tasks are audio recordings played by the examiner and tasks which vary in format depending on the ISE level.

ISE is currently administered at Trinity registered centres throughout the world including, but not limited to, these countries:

- ▶ Asia – China, India, Macau, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, United Arab Emirates
- ▶ Europe – Albania, Andorra, Bulgaria, France, Italy, Malta, Moldova, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, Romania, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom
- ▶ South America – Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay.



Speaking and listening are assessed together in one exam administration. The earlier tasks are used to assess the candidates' speaking ability including communicative effectiveness, interactive listening, language control and delivery. The later tasks are used to assess candidates' independent listening ability. The table below illustrates the exam format.

	ISE A1	ISE Foundation	ISE I	ISE II	ISE III
Speaking assessment (including interactive listening)	-	Topic task	Topic task	Topic task	Topic task
	-	-	-	Collaborative task	Collaborative task
	Conversation task	Conversation task	Conversation task	Conversation task	Conversation task
Independent listening assessment	Independent listening tasks	Independent listening tasks	Independent listening tasks	Independent listening task	Independent listening task

## Quality control

Trinity is committed to ensuring the consistency of its speaking examiners and follows these quality assurance procedures:

- ▶ **Training:**  
The team of examiners are trained and standardised in delivering the exams and applying the rating scales.
- ▶ **Standardisation:**  
Examiners complete regular standardisation marking exercises. The results are analysed to ensure intra-rater consistency.
- ▶ **Monitoring:**  
All speaking exams are audio recorded. All examiners are subject to routine monitoring to check the quality of their examining and the consistency of the marks that they award. Examiners receive feedback and mentoring to help them continuously improve and maintain their examining standard.

## How is ISE Speaking & Listening assessed?

ISE Speaking & Listening is assessed using both scoring and rating scales. A rating scale contains descriptions of performances at different levels. The examiner judges the performance and assigns it a score based on how close to the description the performance is judged to be.

### Speaking assessment

The Speaking task rating scale consists of four criteria and five levels of performance for each criterion. The four criteria are:

- ▶ **Communicative effectiveness** – this includes the fulfilment of the task, appropriacy of contributions and effectiveness of communicative strategies such as turn-taking and repairing breakdowns in communication.
- ▶ **Interactive listening** – this includes the relevance of a response to a question or input, the level of understanding and the speed and accuracy of responses.
- ▶ **Language control** – this includes the range and accuracy of the language functions used and the effect on the listener.
- ▶ **Delivery** – this includes fluency, intelligibility and the effect on the listener.

## Introduction

For each criteria there are five levels of performance. These can be interpreted in this way:

Score	Interpretation
4	Excellent achievement – at the upper end of the CEFR level
3	Appropriate achievement – at the middle of the CEFR level
2	Acceptable achievement – of the CEFR level, possibly newly qualified at that level
1	Non-achievement – not of the CEFR level
0	No topic task, no performance to rate

Each criterion and score has a performance descriptor which enables the examiner to decide which score the candidate is awarded within each criterion. Each ISE level has its own rating scale. The performance descriptors for ISE Foundation, for example, are very different from those for ISE III.

The candidate's speaking performance is assessed across all tasks of the speaking exam and all tasks are equally weighted. The candidate is awarded four scores, one for each criterion of the rating scale. These are then combined to give an overall speaking score.

The overall score for speaking is reached by combining the four criterion scores (also called raw scores). The overall score is converted to the following results:

- ▮ Distinction
- ▮ Merit
- ▮ Pass
- ▮ Fail

Please see the specifications at each ISE level for the full, detailed rating scales.

### Listening exam

Listening is assessed either by objective scoring (the number of correct answers out of a total of possible answers) or by examiner judgment (using a rating scale), or by a combination of both methods. This depends on the ISE level being assessed.

The methods used at each ISE level:

Level	Task	Assessment method	How overall score is reached
ISE A1	Task 1	Objective – number of correct answers	Scores combined to make an overall listening score
	Task 2	Objective – number of correct answers	
ISE Foundation	Task 1	Objective – number of correct answers	Scores combined to make an overall listening score
	Task 2	Subjective using a rating scale	
ISE I	Task 1	Objective – number of correct answers	Scores combined to make an overall listening score
	Task 2	Subjective using a rating scale	
ISE II	Task 1	Subjective using a rating scale	One score awarded
ISE III	Task 1	Subjective using a rating scale	One score awarded

The Independent listening rating scale is not divided into several criteria, but rather gives a more general description of listening at five levels. The examiner takes into consideration the relevance and appropriacy of the candidate's response, correctly identifying the content of the recordings and the amount of detail recognised in the recording.

The Independent listening rating scale does not aim to measure the candidate's speaking performance, therefore fluency or accuracy in the verbal responses are not assessed.

Depending on the ISE level, either the scores (objective and subjective) are combined to reach an overall score, or the single score is converted to one of the following results:

- Distinction
- Merit
- Pass
- Fail

Please see the specifications at each ISE level for the full, detailed rating scales.

## Reporting of results

### Diagnostic profile report

All candidates receive an individual diagnostic profile report.

- This gives a diagnostic profile of the candidate's performance both in speaking and listening, showing what areas of skill development a candidate may want to focus on in the classroom.

### Module certificate

Successful ESOL International ISE candidates receive a module certificate.

- The module certificate gives an overall result for their speaking performance (Distinction, Merit, Pass or Fail).
- The module certificate gives an overall result for their listening performance (Distinction, Merit, Pass or Fail).

### Accredited qualification certificate

- Candidates who pass both modules (Reading & Writing and Speaking & Listening) at the same CEFR level receive accredited ISE certificates. The certificate lists the results achieved for each of the skills tested. In order to be awarded a full qualification certificate, candidates must achieve a minimum of a pass in Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening. Accredited ISE certificates are only given to candidates who have passed both modules at the same CEFR level, with the same candidate ID.

## Support available for teachers, candidates, parents and centres

- There are two handbooks available to help candidates to prepare for ISE – a Guide for Teachers and a Guide for Students. The guides are available for each level of the exam.
- The Guide for Teachers includes information about the exam including the exam format and sample papers.
- The Guide for Students contains information about the exam and what to expect on the day of the exam.
- There are also professional support materials available online, including schemes of work and preparation activities to help teachers practise the skills with their students that they will be expected to demonstrate in the exam.
- An ISE Centre Best Practice Guidebook is available to registered Trinity College London centres and contains all relevant operational and exam administration information.

These support materials can be found at [trinitycollege.com/ISE](https://trinitycollege.com/ISE) and are regularly updated.

# Introduction to the tasks of the ISE Speaking & Listening exam

## The Topic task

This task only takes place from ISE Foundation upwards. Before the exam, the candidate prepares a topic of his or her own choice. This is used as a basis for the discussion in the exam. The Topic task provides the candidate with the opportunity to:

- ▶ demonstrate to the examiner what they can do in English (not just what they know about English)
- ▶ talk about a topic which is of personal interest or relevance to them and which they feel confident about
- ▶ have some degree of autonomy and control over this task
- ▶ show they can link sentences together to talk about a subject at some length
- ▶ demonstrate the language functions of the level.

Candidates are required to complete a topic form at ISE Foundation and ISE I. This form will support them in preparing for the task. At ISE II candidates do not use a topic form but are encouraged to use notes or mind maps. At ISE Foundation to ISE II, the candidate may bring a small item such as a picture, an event ticket or medal into the exam room to support the topic discussion. However, mobile phones, live animals or dangerous objects such as knives must not be brought into the exam room.

At ISE III the candidate must prepare a formal handout to accompany their topic presentation. If the candidate is unable to prepare their own topic form, a teacher may complete this for them.

Level	Support
ISE A1	N/A
ISE Foundation	Topic form with four points, plus optional small item
ISE I	Topic form with four points, plus optional small item
ISE II	Candidate may use notes or a mind map and may bring a small item
ISE III	Formal handout must accompany the presentation

The topic form at ISE Foundation and ISE I is also used by the examiner to ask the candidate questions. This encourages spontaneous conversation and discourages recitation by the candidate as the examiner may ask questions about any point on the topic form in any order.

For details on the specific examiner input and expected candidate response, please see the task specifications at each level in this document.

For sample topic forms see appendix 1. For information and advice on preparing for the Topic task please see the Guide for Teachers and the Guide for Students. The Trinity College London website also has support materials and advice on choosing a topic and completing the topic form.

## The Collaborative task

This task only takes place at ISE II and ISE III. An initial prompt from the examiner gives rise to interaction which is controlled and maintained by the candidate.

The examiner reads a prompt chosen from a list of several options. The prompt presents a dilemma, circumstance or opinion. The candidate needs to take the initiative to discover more about the background of the examiner's circumstances or position, and engage in a sustained discussion about it.

The Collaborative task provides the opportunity for the candidate to demonstrate his or her communicative competence, requiring the candidate to initiate turns and control the direction of the interaction. It is an authentic exchange of information and opinions, with the language functions listed at each ISE level arising naturally out of the task.

For details on the specific examiner input and expected candidate response, please see the specifications at each level.

### **The Conversation task**

The Conversation task takes place at all levels. The Conversation task is a meaningful and authentic exchange of information, ideas and opinions, rather than a formal 'question and answer' interview.

The examiner and the candidate will discuss one or more subject areas from the list of the subject areas provided in the specifications for each ISE level.

At the lower ISE levels, the examiner offers more support to the candidate.

At the higher ISE levels, the candidate is expected to take more responsibility for initiating and maintaining the conversation. The candidate is expected to ask the examiner questions. These questions should arise naturally out of the conversation and are used to further the interaction.

For details on the specific examiner input and expected candidate response, please see the specifications at each ISE level.

### **The Independent listening task**

While the whole exam requires listening skills in order for the candidate to take part in a conversation with the examiner, this task enables the candidate to demonstrate the kind of listening skills required in lectures and lessons.

The candidate listens to recordings and responds to questions that require short/non-verbal responses or conversation with the examiner, depending on the ISE level. The candidate listens to the same recording(s) twice.

Note-taking while listening to the audio is encouraged at specific points in the task to encourage the development of the candidate's listening and study skills. Notes are not assessed.

For details on the specific examiner input and expected candidate response, please see the specifications at each ISE level.



# **Task specifications, sample exams & rating scales**

### ISE A1

**Format:** One speaking and listening task and a listening phase with two tasks

**Timing:** 14 minutes (12 minute exam plus 2 minutes examiner administration time)

**Level:** A1 of the CEFR

A sample ISE A1 Speaking & Listening exam can be viewed at [trinitycollege.com/ISE-A1](http://trinitycollege.com/ISE-A1)

### ISE A1 task specifications

#### Conversation task

Task type and format	The Conversation task is an integrated speaking and listening task. The examiner selects one conversation subject area from the list of ISE A1 subject areas and asks the candidate questions to start the conversation. The exam will cover more than one conversation subject area.
Timing	4 minutes
Task focus	<p>The candidate is expected to show his or her ability to use the language functions of the ISE A1 level. These functions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Stating simple facts</li><li>▸ Understanding instructions</li><li>▸ Giving personal information about present circumstances</li><li>▸ Understanding directions and indicating locations (not giving directions)</li><li>▸ Asking questions, eg <i>How are you? Do you live here?</i></li><li>▸ Describing familiar things, eg people, objects including colours and position</li><li>▸ Understanding and informing about possessions</li><li>▸ Basic linking: <i>and; then</i>.</li></ul>
Examiner role	The examiner uses the list of subject areas and their own test plans to ask questions and elicit the target language functions of the level. The conversation is supported by visual materials. The candidate should ask the examiner a question.
Subject area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Personal details; family and friends</li><li>▸ Days of the week and months of the year; numbers to 100</li><li>▸ Rooms in the home</li><li>▸ Locations; places in local area</li><li>▸ Everyday activities; home life and routine</li><li>▸ Objects in household, classroom, bedroom, including colour and locations.</li></ul>
Assessment	<p>The Conversation task is given one score using four criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Communicative effectiveness</li><li>▸ Interactive listening</li><li>▸ Language control</li><li>▸ Delivery.</li></ul> <p>Please see the Speaking and Interactive Listening rating scale on page 19 for the full performance descriptors for each criterion and level of performance.</p>



**Independent listening task**

Task type	The Independent listening tasks are audio recordings. The candidate listens to the recordings and responds orally.
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Timing	8 minutes (approximately).
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**Task 1**

Task format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The candidate listens twice to 4 short dialogues. The candidate completes one question for each dialogue by selecting the correct picture from three options.</li> <li>▶ The recording is approximately 3 minutes long.</li> </ul>
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Task focus	The candidate shows that they are able to process facts at word level and recognise content words, provided that people talk very slowly and clearly.
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Examiner role	The examiner plays the recording and reads the instructions (see text of sample exam on page 20). If the candidate asks, the examiner may repeat the instructions once.
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Expected task outcomes	Selecting required lexical and factual information.
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Assessment	Objective scoring – number of correct responses out of a total of four.
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**Task 2**

Task format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The candidate listens twice to a factual text (a monologue) such as a voice message, an announcement, some instructions. They identify a concrete fact in each section. The candidate's answer is one word only.</li> <li>▶ The candidate can take notes. The notes are optional and are not assessed.</li> <li>▶ The recording is approximately 2 minutes 30 seconds long.</li> </ul>
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Task focus	The candidate shows that they can identify concrete information (eg places and times) from short audio recordings on familiar everyday topics, provided they are delivered very slowly and clearly.
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Examiner role	The examiner plays the recording and reads the instructions. If the candidate asks, the examiner may repeat the instructions once.
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Expected task outcomes	Identifying and selecting the required lexical and factual information and reporting orally.
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Assessment	Objective scoring – number of correct responses out of a total of three.
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### Listening text specifications

#### The audio recording

**Speech rate:** Slow conversational speech. Short utterances with frequent pauses. Very rhythmic delivery with clear emphasis on important words.

**Pattern:** Dialogue (Task 1) and Monologue (Task 2).

**Articulation:** Precise, with some assimilation and reduced forms of words. Natural rhythm.

**Accent:** Standard British English.

**Content:** Task 1 contains 4 discrete dialogues to cover the range of topics, eg a place (location), a person, a room, an activity, an object, a cost. Task 2 is a single monologue that includes a variety of concrete facts, such as a place name, a number (eg time), an object, etc.

#### The audio content

**Subject area:** Factual information similar to that provided in school (ie information already familiar through the first language).

**Type and structure:** Narrative, descriptive, instructional, simple facts presented sequentially. Examples: message left on phone; an announcement at a station or in a store; a set of instructions.

**Syntactic complexity:** Very short utterances. Mainly standard subject-verb-object sequence with active verbs. Generally one idea unit per utterance, maximum two.

**Redundancy and rephrasing:** Some repetition of information and some rephrasing.

**Speech rate:** Around 140 words per minute.

#### Length of recording:

Task 1 – Each dialogue is approximately 3 minutes

Task 2 – 2 minutes 30 seconds.

## ISE A1 Speaking and listening rating scale

This rating scale is used by the examiner to make a judgement of the candidate's performance in the A1 Speaking & Listening exam.

Score	Communicative effectiveness	Interactive listening	Language control	Delivery
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Task fulfilment</li> <li>Appropriacy of contributions/turn taking</li> <li>Repair strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehension and relevant response</li> <li>Speech rate of examiner interventions</li> <li>Speed and accuracy of response</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Range</li> <li>Accuracy and precision</li> <li>Effects of inaccuracies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intelligibility</li> <li>Lexical stress/intonation</li> <li>Fluency</li> <li>Effects on the listener</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfils the task very well</li> <li>Asks and responds appropriately to questions</li> <li>Effectively says or signals in basic ways with words and gestures that he/she did not follow</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands short and simple interventions but may need repetition</li> <li>Follows conversational speech delivered slowly and clearly</li> <li>May make slow responses due to the need to make sense of the input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a good range of basic grammatical structures/lexis and memorised phrases for topics at this level</li> <li>Shows a good level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision for simple exchanges</li> <li>Makes basic mistakes, but most errors do not impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High frequency lexical items are intelligible despite noticeable use of non-standard phonemes</li> <li>Uses basic lexical stress and intonation enough to follow</li> <li>May speak slowly with frequent pausing and hesitation</li> <li>May require some careful listening</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfils the task appropriately, may need some support</li> <li>Maintains simple exchanges by answering questions with some examiner support, and asking a question when prompted</li> <li>Attempts to say or signal in basic ways that he/she did not follow</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not always understand interventions, may need repetition and or rephrasing</li> <li>Follows conversational speech delivered slowly and clearly but may need interventions repeated at a slower rate</li> <li>Often makes slow responses due to the need to make sense of the input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a satisfactory range of basic grammatical structures/lexis and memorised phrases for topics at this level</li> <li>Shows a satisfactory level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision for simple exchanges, but there may be omission of grammatical elements and gaps in the lexical range</li> <li>May make basic mistakes that do not affect meaning</li> <li>Makes major errors that occasionally impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High frequency lexical items are generally intelligible despite noticeable use of non-standard phonemes</li> <li>Uses basic lexical stress and intonation enough to follow in most turns</li> <li>Speaks slowly with frequent and extended pausing and hesitation</li> <li>Requires careful listening and may need support from the listener</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfils the task acceptably with support</li> <li>Interaction is dependent on examiner support to answer simple questions – this is not always successful</li> <li>May attempt to say or signal in a basic way that he/she did not follow</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not always understand interventions, quite often needs repetition and or rephrasing and this is not always successful</li> <li>Follows some conversation delivered slowly and clearly but may not understand several interventions even when repeated at a slower rate</li> <li>Responses are delayed due to difficulty making sense of the input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses some basic grammatical structures/lexis and memorised phrases relevant for topics at this level</li> <li>Shows a basic level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision – just enough to follow with support from the listener</li> <li>Makes basic mistakes that do not affect meaning</li> <li>Makes major errors that impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High frequency lexical items may be unintelligible due to use of non-standard phonemes</li> <li>May use some basic lexical stress and intonation</li> <li>Speaks slowly with frequent and noticeable pausing and hesitation</li> <li>Requires careful listening, sometimes difficult to follow even with support from the listener</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not fulfil the task even with support</li> <li>Has consistent difficulty in responding appropriately to simple questions</li> <li>May attempt to say or signal in a basic way that he/she did not follow, these attempts may not be successful</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands few or no examiner interventions even with support</li> <li>Has difficulty in following most interventions when delivered slowly and clearly</li> <li>May at times be unable to respond due to failure making sense of the input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May only use isolated words and simple memorised phrases and cannot deal with topics at this level</li> <li>May be unable to give information or take part in simple exchanges due to a lack of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision</li> <li>Makes frequent basic and major errors which impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High frequency lexical items are often unintelligible</li> <li>Does not use basic lexical stress or intonation</li> <li>Speaks very slowly with frequent and extended pausing and hesitation</li> <li>Requires careful listening, often difficult to follow even with support from the listener</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	No performance to assess (candidate does not speak, or does not speak in English).			

### ISE A1 sample exam

#### Conversation task

This task presents an opportunity for a realistic exchange of information.

In this task, the examiner chooses one of the subject areas from the list below:

- ▮ Personal details; family and friends
- ▮ Days of the week and months of the year; numbers to 100
- ▮ Rooms in the home
- ▮ Locations; places in local area
- ▮ Everyday activities: home life and routine
- ▮ Objects in household, classroom, bedroom, including colour and locations.

The examiner signals the start of this task by saying:

*'Hello! My name is ... What's your name? (so that's full name and this is ISE A1)*

*How are you today?'*

Once the candidate has responded, the examiner asks questions to elicit various functions of the ISE A1 level.

At the end of the Conversation task, the examiner says:

*'Thank you. Now we're going to move on to the Listening task.'*

#### Independent listening task

The candidate listens to two recordings and can take notes but responds orally.

##### Task 1

The examiner reads some instructions to introduce the task. If the candidate asks, the examiner may repeat the instructions once. Below is an example from the sample exam:

*'You hear four conversations. For each conversation, choose the correct answer: A, B or C. You can write the correct letter A, B, or C on your paper. You hear the conversation twice. You have ten seconds to look at the pictures. [After 10 seconds] Are you ready?'*

Note to examiner: Play the recording for task 1. Each question will play twice. Ask the questions included in this task allowing the candidate time to respond. The candidate has up to 15 seconds after the recording has finished playing for the second time to complete the task if necessary.

##### Task 2

*'You hear a message. There are three questions. Answer each question with one word or a number. You can write your answers on your paper. You hear the message twice. Are you ready?'*

Note to examiner: Play the recording for task 2. Each question will play twice. When the recording finishes continue reading the following instructions.

*'There are three questions. Please answer with one word or a number.'*

Note to examiner: Please ask the questions included in this task allowing the candidate time to respond. The candidate has up to 15 seconds after the recording has finished playing for the second time to complete the task if necessary.

**Task 1 Sample audio script**

Rubric: *ISE A1 Task 1*

Rubric: *Question 1. What number does Richard's friend live at?*

Girl: *Where do you live, Richard?*

Boy: *I live in house number 14. My friend lives in my street at number 35.*

Rubric: *Now listen again.*

Rubric: *Question 2. Where is Richard?*

Boy: *Where's Richard today?*

Girl: *He's not at home. He's playing with his school friends. They are at the beach.*

Rubric: *Now listen again.*

Rubric: *Question 3. What is on the table?*

Girl: *Tell me about your living room.*

Boy: *There's a table next to the TV. There's a picture on the table and the TV is on the wall.*

Rubric: *Now listen again.*

Rubric: *Question 4. What colour are the friend's eyes?*

Boy: *Is your best friend nice?*

Girl: *Yes, he is. He has brown hair and blue eyes. He wears a green t-shirt.*

Rubric: *Now listen again.*

Rubric: *This is the end of Task 1.*

Task 1 answer options

Question 1



A

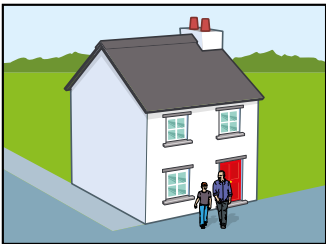


B

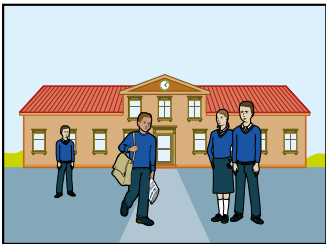


C

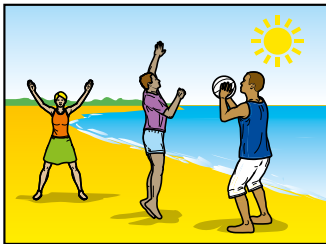
Question 2



A

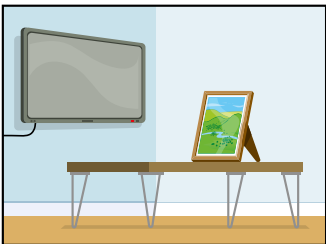


B

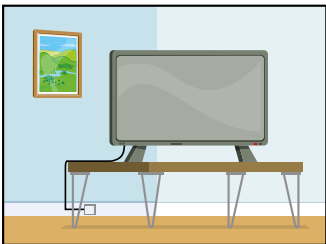


C

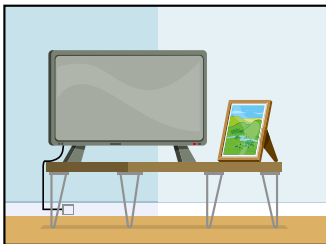
Question 3



A

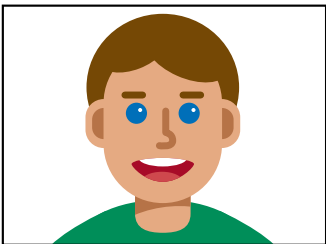


B

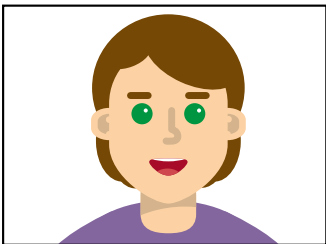


C

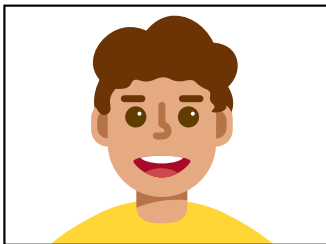
Question 4



A



B



C

**Task 1 Answers**

Question	Answer
Question 1. What number does Richard's friend live at?	C
Question 2. Where is Richard?	C
Question 3. What is on the table?	A
Question 4. What colour are the friend's eyes?	A

**Task 2 Sample audio script**

Rubric: *ISE A1 Task 2*

Rubric: *Question 1: What time does the train go?*

Boy: *Hi, it's Richard, wake up! Are you ready for the beach? There's a train every half an hour. Our train goes at 11:30 and it arrives at 12:00, is that OK?*

Rubric: *Question 2: What can they have at the beach?*

Boy: *Then we can go to the beach and have a nice lunch. After, we can go and have an ice cream in the park.*

Rubric: *Question 3: What can they buy later?*

Boy: *Oh, can you bring sandwiches please? We can buy some drinks from the supermarket later. See you!*

Rubric: *Now listen again.*

Rubric: *This is the end of Task 2.*

**Task 2 Answers**

Question	Answer
Question 1. What time does the train go?	11.30
Question 2. What can they have at the beach?	Lunch
Question 3. What can they buy later?	Drinks

### ISE Foundation

**Format:** Two speaking and listening tasks and a listening phase with two tasks

**Timing:** 16 minutes (14 minute exam plus 2 minutes examiner administration time)

**Level:** A2 of the CEFR

A sample ISE Foundation Speaking & Listening exam can be viewed at [trinitycollege.com/ISEfoundation](http://trinitycollege.com/ISEfoundation).

### ISE Foundation task specifications

#### Topic task

Task type and format	<p>The Topic task is an integrated speaking and listening task.</p> <p>The candidate prepares a topic for discussion and a topic form with four points, which he or she must bring to the exam and may use to help in the discussion.</p> <p>The examiner uses the same form to ask the candidate questions about their chosen topic. The examiner chooses the order to discuss the topic points.</p> <p>The candidate may bring a small item such as a picture, an event ticket or medal into the exam room to support the topic discussion.</p>
Timing	4 minutes
Task focus	<p>The candidate is expected to show his or her ability to use the language functions of the ISE level. These functions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▫ Giving personal information about present and past circumstances/activities</li><li>▫ Describing routines</li><li>▫ Describing ability and inability</li><li>▫ Describing future plans</li><li>▫ Expressing likes and dislikes</li><li>▫ Describing people, objects and places</li><li>▫ Expressing simple comparisons</li><li>▫ Asking for information (eg simple questions about everyday life)</li><li>▫ Asking for clarification</li><li>▫ Responding to requests for clarification.</li></ul>
Examiner role	<p>The examiner uses the topic form to ask the candidate questions in order to elicit the language functions of the level (see sample exam for example stem questions). The examiner chooses which points to talk about, in no fixed order, and may also interrupt the candidate where necessary to discourage recitation and encourage spontaneous conversation. The candidate should ask the examiner a question.</p>
Assessment	<p>The Topic task and Conversation task are given one score using four criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▫ Communicative effectiveness</li><li>▫ Interactive listening</li><li>▫ Language control</li><li>▫ Delivery.</li></ul>



<b>Conversation task</b>	
Task type and format	The Conversation task is an integrated speaking and listening task. The examiner selects one conversation subject area from the list of ISE Foundation subject areas and asks the candidate questions to start the conversation.
Timing	2 minutes.
Task focus	<p>The candidate is expected to show his or her ability to use the language functions of the ISE level. These functions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▮ Giving personal information about present and past circumstances/activities</li> <li>▮ Describing routines</li> <li>▮ Expressing ability and inability</li> <li>▮ Describing future plans</li> <li>▮ Expressing likes and dislikes</li> <li>▮ Describing people, objects and places</li> <li>▮ Expressing simple comparisons</li> <li>▮ Asking for information (eg simple questions about everyday life)</li> <li>▮ Asking for clarification</li> <li>▮ Responding to requests for clarification.</li> </ul>
Examiner role	The examiner uses the list of subject areas and their own test plans to ask questions and elicit the target language functions of the level (see sample exams at <a href="http://trinitycollege.com/ISEfoundation">trinitycollege.com/ISEfoundation</a> for example stem questions). The candidate should ask the examiner a question.
Subject area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▮ Holidays</li> <li>▮ Shopping</li> <li>▮ School and work</li> <li>▮ Hobbies and sports</li> <li>▮ Food</li> <li>▮ Weekend and seasonal activities.</li> </ul>
Assessment	<p>The Conversation task and Topic task are given one score using four criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▮ Communicative effectiveness</li> <li>▮ Interactive listening</li> <li>▮ Language control</li> <li>▮ Delivery.</li> </ul> <p>Please see the Speaking and listening rating scale on page 28 for the full performance descriptors for each criterion and level of performance.</p>

### Independent listening task

Task type	The Independent listening tasks are audio recordings. The candidate listens to the recordings and responds orally.
Timing	8 minutes (approximately).
<b>Task 1</b>	
Task format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The candidate listens twice to basic information. The candidate completes five blanks on a diagram. The information is visual/graphic.</li> <li>▶ The recording is approximately 45 seconds long.</li> </ul>
Task focus	The candidate shows that they are able to process facts at word level and recognise content words.
Examiner role	The examiner plays the recording and reads the instructions (see text of sample exam on page 30). If the candidate asks, the examiner may repeat the instructions once.
Expected task outcomes	Selecting required lexical and factual information.
Assessment	Objective scoring – number of correct responses out of a total of five.
<b>Task 2</b>	
Task format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The candidate listens twice to a factual text (usually a narrative) such as a radio programme, educational podcast, lecture or teacher talk. They report five facts from the recording orally. The examiner then asks three questions about the content of the recording and the candidate responds.</li> <li>▶ The candidate is provided with blank notepaper and a pen/pencil for writing notes. The notes are optional and are not assessed.</li> <li>▶ The recording is approximately 1 minute long.</li> </ul>
Task focus	The candidate shows that they are able to process facts, mainly at word level, recognise content words and understand whole utterances.
Examiner role	The examiner reads the instructions (see text of sample exam on page 32) and then plays the recording. The candidate may take notes. The examiner asks three follow-up questions after the candidate has reported five facts. If the candidate asks, the examiner may repeat the instructions and individual questions once.
Expected task outcomes	Identifying and selecting the required lexical and factual information and reporting orally.
Assessment	This task is assessed using a rating scale of 0-4. The number of facts reported correctly is taken into account as well as the promptness with which the candidate responds. Please see the Independent listening rating scale for more detail.

## Listening text specifications

**The audio recording**

**Speech rate:** Slow conversational speech. Short utterances with frequent pauses. Very rhythmic delivery with clear emphasis on important words.

**Pattern:** Monologue.

**Articulation:** Precise, with some assimilation and reduced forms of words. Natural rhythm.

**Accent:** Standard British English.

**Content:** Task 1 contains only the targeted information. Task 2 contains eight distinct facts.

**The audio content**

**Subject area:** Factual information similar to that provided in secondary school teaching (ie information already familiar through the first language).

**Type and structure:** Narrative, descriptive, instructional, simple facts presented sequentially. Examples: radio, podcast, teacher talk, lecture, announcement.

**Syntactic complexity:** Short utterances averaging seven words. Mainly standard subject-verb-object sequence with active verbs. Range of tense and aspect. Linked mainly by co-ordination. Use of simple relative clauses.

**Information density and complexity:** Generally one idea unit per utterance, maximum two.

**Redundancy and rephrasing:** Some repetition of information and some rephrasing.

**Speech rate:** Around 140 words per minute.

**Length of recording:**

Task 1 – 45 seconds.

Task 2 – 1 minute.

### ISE Foundation Speaking and listening rating scale

This rating scale is used by the examiner to make a judgement of the candidate's performance in the Speaking & Listening exam (the Topic and the Conversation tasks).

Score	Communicative effectiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Task fulfilment</li> <li>Appropriacy of contributions /turn-taking</li> <li>Repair strategies</li> </ul>	Interactive listening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehension and relevant response</li> <li>Level of understanding</li> <li>Speech rate of examiner interventions</li> <li>Speed and accuracy of response</li> </ul>	Language control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Range</li> <li>Accuracy/precision</li> <li>Effects of inaccuracies</li> </ul>	Delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intelligibility</li> <li>Lexical stress/intonation</li> <li>Fluency</li> <li>Effects on the listener</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfils the task very well</li> <li>Maintains simple exchanges</li> <li>Says or signals in basic ways that he/she did not follow (eg 'Can you repeat?')</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands short and simple interventions with little repetition</li> <li>Identifies factual information</li> <li>Follows conversational speech, sometimes slowed</li> <li>Sometimes responds slowly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a sufficient range of basic grammatical structures/lexis and memorised phrases to deal with topics at this level</li> <li>Shows a sufficient level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision to deal with simple exchanges</li> <li>Makes basic mistakes, but most errors do not impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mostly intelligible despite noticeable use of non-standard phonemes</li> <li>Uses basic lexical stress and intonation appropriately</li> <li>Speaks slowly with frequent pausing and hesitation</li> <li>Requires some careful listening</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfils the task appropriately</li> <li>Maintains simple exchanges, despite some difficulty, some examiner support is necessary</li> <li>Attempts to say or signal in basic ways that he/she did not follow (eg 'Repeat?', 'Mm?' with a facial expression)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands short and simple interventions but may need repetition</li> <li>Identifies factual information, sometimes incomplete</li> <li>Follows slow conversational speech</li> <li>May make slow responses due to the need to make sense of the input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a range of basic grammatical structures/lexis and memorised phrases to deal with topics at this level</li> <li>Shows a basic level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision to deal with simple exchanges</li> <li>Makes basic mistakes – major errors occasionally impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mostly intelligible despite noticeable use of non-standard phonemes</li> <li>Uses basic lexical stress and intonation enough to follow</li> <li>Speaks slowly with frequent and extended pausing and hesitation</li> <li>Requires careful listening</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfils the task acceptably with support</li> <li>Examiner support is necessary to keep the interaction going</li> <li>Attempts to signal in basic ways that he/she did not follow</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not always understand interventions, quite often needs repetition</li> <li>Identifies factual information just enough to respond</li> <li>Follows slow conversational speech in places</li> <li>Makes slow responses due to difficulty in making sense of the input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses an acceptable range of basic grammatical structures/lexis and memorised phrases to deal with topics at this level</li> <li>Shows a basic level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision – just enough to follow</li> <li>Makes basic mistakes – major errors sometimes impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sometimes unintelligible</li> <li>Use of non-standard phonemes is very evident</li> <li>Uses some basic lexical stress and intonation</li> <li>Speaks slowly with frequent and noticeable pausing and hesitation</li> <li>Requires careful listening, sometimes difficult to follow</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not fulfil the task even with support</li> <li>Difficult to keep the interaction going even with examiner support</li> <li>May attempt to signal in basic ways that he/she did not follow</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands few or no examiner interventions</li> <li>Does not identify factual information</li> <li>Has difficulty in following even slow conversational speech</li> <li>Makes slow responses due to failure to understand input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses some basic grammatical structures/lexis, but does not manage to deal with topics at this level</li> <li>Does not show an adequate level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision for simple exchanges</li> <li>Makes basic mistakes, and major errors often impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sometimes or often unintelligible</li> <li>Does not use basic lexical stress or intonation</li> <li>Speaks very slowly with frequent and noticeable pausing and hesitation</li> <li>Requires careful listening, often difficult to follow</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	No performance to assess (candidate does not speak, or does not speak in English).			

### ISE Foundation Independent listening rating scale

This rating scale is used by the examiner to make a judgement of the candidate's performance in task 2 of the Independent listening tasks.

CEFR benchmark:

- ▶ Can understand enough to be able to meet needs of a concrete type provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated.
- ▶ Can understand phrases and expressions related to areas of most immediate priority (eg very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment) provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated.

<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Identifies and reports all/almost all relevant facts accurately (eg eight or more)</li> <li>▶ Responds to questions with promptness</li> <li>▶ Needs no/little repetition or rephrasing of questions</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Identifies and reports required number of relevant facts accurately (eg five to seven)</li> <li>▶ Responds to questions with relative promptness</li> <li>▶ May need some repetition or rephrasing of questions</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Identifies and reports some relevant facts, despite gaps in understanding (eg three to four)</li> <li>▶ Responds to questions after some hesitation</li> <li>▶ May need some repetition or rephrasing of questions</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Identifies and reports limited number of relevant facts (eg zero to two)</li> <li>▶ Responds to questions only after noticeable hesitation</li> <li>▶ May need extensive repetition and/or rephrasing of questions</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ No performance to assess (eg candidate does not speak)</li> </ul>

### ISE Foundation sample exam

#### Topic task

Before the exam, the candidate prepares a topic of his or her own choice which is used as the basis for the discussion.

The examiner signals the start of this task by saying:

*'We're going to start with your topic. Can I have your topic form please?  
So, we're going to talk about...?'*

Once the candidate has responded, the examiner asks questions to elicit the language functions of the ISE Foundation level.

If the candidate does not ask a question, the examiner prompts him or her, for example by saying:  
*'Ask me a question about...'*

At the end of the Topic task, the examiner says:

*'Thank you for talking about your topic. Now we're going to talk about something different.'*

#### Conversation task

This task presents an opportunity for a realistic exchange of information, ideas and opinions.

In this task, the examiner chooses one of the subject areas from the list below:

- ▮ Holidays
- ▮ Shopping
- ▮ School and work
- ▮ Hobbies and sports
- ▮ Food
- ▮ Weekend and seasonal activities.

The examiner signals the start of this task by saying:

*'Let's talk about...'*

Once the candidate has responded, the examiner asks questions to elicit various functions of the ISE Foundation level.

At the end of the Conversation task, the examiner says:

*'Thank you. Now we're going to move on to the Listening task.'*

#### Independent listening task

The candidate listens to two recordings and responds to questions in writing and in conversation with the examiner.

##### Task 1

The candidate is handed a listening exam form and should write their name at the top.

The examiner reads some instructions to introduce the task. If the candidate asks, the examiner may repeat the instructions once. Below is an example from the sample exam:

*'This is a map of an island. Here, it shows north, south, west and east [The examiner points to the compass].*

*You're going to hear someone talking about the island. You'll hear the talk twice. These pictures [the examiner points at the pictures] show some places on the island. The person will tell you where the places are.*

*Each picture has a letter. Write the correct letters in the circles on the map. There's one circle that you do not need to use.*

*There's an example to show you what to do [the examiner points at both picture A and the circle].  
Please look at the map and the pictures now. You have 15 seconds [the examiner waits 15 seconds].  
Are you ready?'*

The examiner plays the recording for task 1. While the recording is playing, the candidate completes the task.

The candidate has up to 15 seconds after the recording has finished playing for the second time to complete the task if necessary.

**Task 1 Sample audio script**

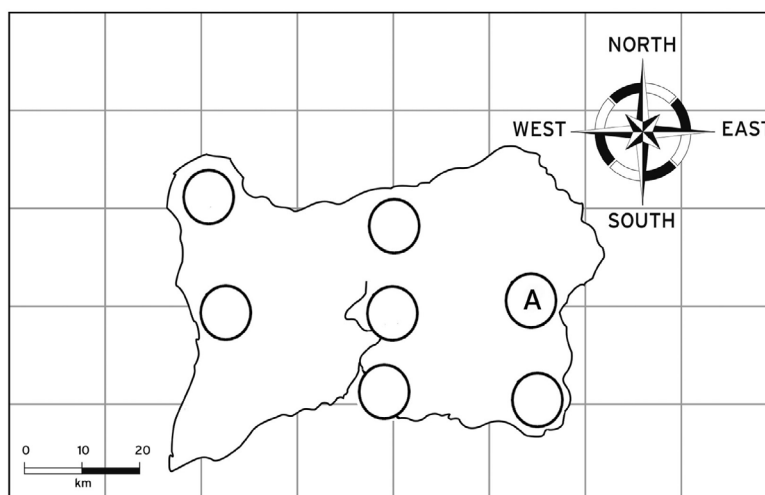
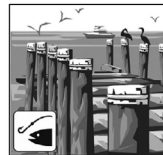
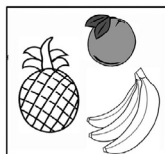
This map shows an island in the Pacific Ocean. There is only one village, which is on the east of the island. The people who live here mainly eat rice and fish. The rice is grown in the centre of the island which is very flat. A river runs through the rice fields, and there is a small fishing port where the river meets the sea. The people grow fruit in the north-west of the island, especially oranges and bananas. There are also small farms in the north where the farmers keep goats. The west side of the island is mainly covered by trees.

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## Integrated Skills in English – ISE Foundation

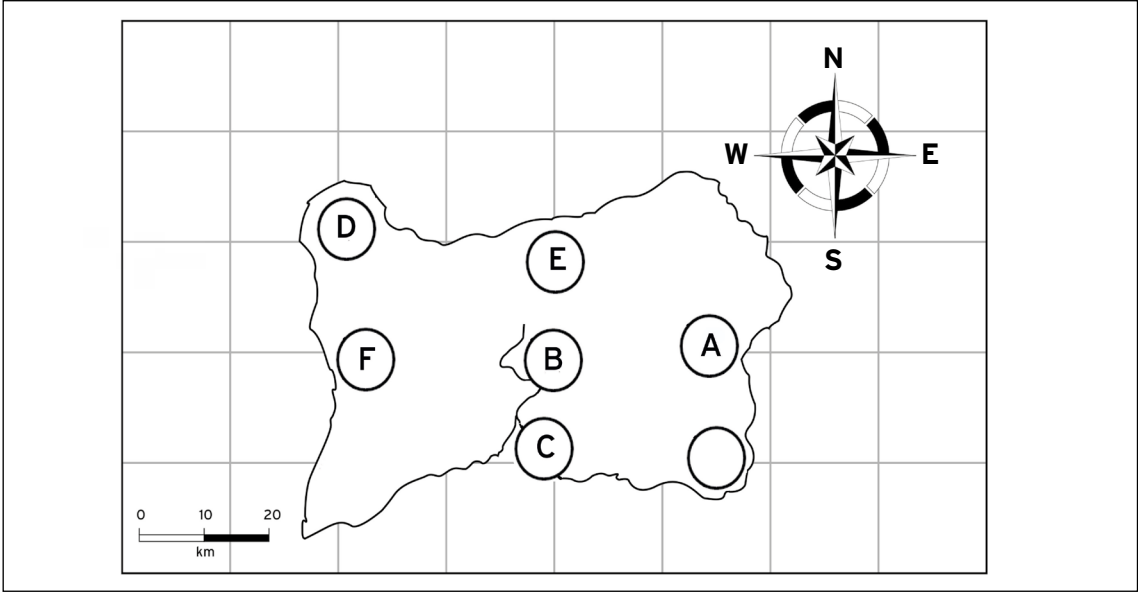
### Listening exam form

Candidate name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Task 1****A****B****C****D****E****F**

The pictures show some places on the island. Each picture has a letter. Write the correct letters in the circles on the map. There is an example to show you what to do.

Task 1 answer key



Sample Independent listening task 2

Audio script for Independent listening task 2

You are going to hear a short talk about a writer. You will hear the talk twice. As you listen, write down some facts about the writer on your notepaper, if you want to. Then I'll ask you to tell me five facts about the writer. Are you ready?

Roald Dahl was a famous writer. He was born in Wales in 1916. His parents were from Norway. When he was 23 years old he became a pilot. Everybody called him 'Lofty' because he was very tall. Dahl wrote mystery stories for adults at first. Later when he had children he started writing children's stories. Dahl worked in a small building in his garden. He wrote for four hours every day. He always used pencil and yellow paper. When he had an idea for a story he wrote it in an old red notebook. Dahl loved chocolate and his most famous book was about a chocolate factory.

Answers

Facts from the recording

1	Born in Wales 1916
2	Parents from Norway
3	Age 23 he became a pilot
4	Called 'Lofty' – very tall
5	First wrote mystery stories for adults
6	Had children – wrote children's stories
7	Worked in small building in his garden
8	Wrote for 4 hours every day
9	Used pencil/yellow paper/old red notebook
10	Loved chocolate/wrote about chocolate factory



## Sample examiner questions

1	Where/when was he born?
2	Where were his parents from?
3	What did he do when he was 23? How old was he when he became a pilot?
4	Why was he called 'Lofty'?
5	What did he write first?
6	When did he start writing children's stories?
7	Where did he work?
8	How often/when did he write?
9	What did he use?
10	What food did he love?

### ISE I

**Format:** Two speaking and listening tasks and a listening phase with two tasks

**Timing:** 18 minutes (16 minute exam plus 2 minutes examiner administration time)

**Level:** B1 of the CEFR

A sample ISE I Speaking & Listening exam can be viewed at [trinitycollege.com/ISEI](http://trinitycollege.com/ISEI).

### ISE I task specifications

Topic task	
Task type and format	<p>The Topic task is an integrated speaking and listening task.</p> <p>The candidate prepares a topic for discussion and a topic form with four points, which he or she must bring to the exam and may use to help in the discussion. The examiner uses the same form to ask the candidate questions about their chosen topic. The examiner chooses the order to discuss the topic points.</p> <p>The candidate may bring a small item such as a picture, an event ticket or medal into the exam room to support the topic discussion.</p>
Timing	4 minutes
Task focus	<p>The candidate is expected to show his or her ability to use the language functions of the ISE level. These functions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Describing past actions in the indefinite and recent past</li><li>▸ Describing the future, informing and expressing intention</li><li>▸ Predicting and expressing certainty and uncertainty</li><li>▸ Giving reasons, opinions and preferences</li><li>▸ Expressing obligation</li><li>▸ Asking for information and opinions.</li></ul>
Examiner role	<p>The examiner uses the topic form to ask the candidate questions in order to elicit the language functions of the level (see sample exam for example stem questions). The examiner may also interrupt the candidate where necessary to discourage recitation and encourage spontaneous conversation. The candidate should ask the examiner a question.</p>
Assessment	<p>The Topic task and Conversation task are given one score using four criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Communicative effectiveness</li><li>▸ Interactive listening</li><li>▸ Language control</li><li>▸ Delivery.</li></ul> <p>Please see the Speaking and listening rating scale on page 38 for the full performance descriptors for each criterion and level of performance.</p>

**Conversation task**

Task type and format	The Conversation task is an integrated speaking and listening task. The examiner selects one conversation subject area from the list of ISE I subject areas and asks the candidate questions to start a conversation.
Timing	2 minutes.
Task focus	<p>The candidate is expected to show his or her ability to use the language functions of the ISE level. These functions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▸ Describing past actions in the indefinite and recent past</li> <li>▸ Describing the future, informing and expressing intention</li> <li>▸ Predicting and expressing certainty and uncertainty</li> <li>▸ Giving reasons, opinions and preferences</li> <li>▸ Expressing obligation</li> <li>▸ Asking for information and opinions.</li> </ul>
Examiner role	The examiner uses the list of subject areas below to ask questions and elicit the target language functions of the level. The candidate should ask the examiner a question.
Subject area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▸ Travel</li> <li>▸ Money</li> <li>▸ Fashion</li> <li>▸ Rules and regulations</li> <li>▸ Health and fitness</li> <li>▸ Learning a foreign language.</li> </ul>
Assessment	<p>The Conversation task and Topic task are given one score using four criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▸ Communicative effectiveness</li> <li>▸ Interactive listening</li> <li>▸ Language control</li> <li>▸ Delivery.</li> </ul> <p>Please see the Speaking and listening rating scale on page 38 for the full performance descriptors for each criterion and level of performance.</p>

### Independent listening task

Task type	The Independent listening tasks are audio recordings. The candidate listens to the recordings and responds orally.
Timing	10 minutes (approximately).
<b>Task 1</b>	
Task format	The candidate listens twice to basic information (descriptive or narrative) and responds in one or two words to six questions asked by the examiner. The recording is approximately 1 minute long. The candidate may take notes.
Task focus	The candidate shows that they are able to process and report facts that are partly derived from understanding whole utterances and partly inferred from recognising content words.
Examiner role	The examiner plays the recording and reads the instructions and questions (see text of sample exam on page 40). If the candidate asks, the examiner may repeat the instructions and individual questions once.
Expected task outcomes	Reporting lexical and factual information, with basic links between facts.
Assessment	Objective scoring – number of correct answers out of a total of six.
<b>Task 2</b>	
Task format	The candidate listens to a factual text (exposition) and reports orally the gist of what they have heard. They listen a second time and report six facts from the recording and answer four oral examiner questions about the recording. The candidate is provided with blank notepaper and a pen/pencil for writing notes while they listen for the second time. The notes are optional and not assessed. The recording is approximately 1 minute 15 seconds long.
Task focus	The candidate shows that they are able to process and report facts that are partly derived from understanding whole utterances and partly inferred from recognising content words. The candidate shows they can identify some links between facts (eg cause and effect) and identify main points and detail.
Examiner role	The examiner plays the recording and reads the instructions (see text of sample exam on page 42). If the candidate asks, the examiner may repeat the instructions and individual questions once. The examiner asks a gist question and four follow-up questions to the facts reported by the candidate.
Expected task outcomes	Identifying main points with some limited supporting detail. Reporting lexical and factual information, with basic links between facts.
Assessment	This task is assessed using a rating scale of 0-4. The number of facts reported correctly is taken into account as well as the promptness with which the candidate responds. Please see the Independent listening rating scale for more detail.

## Listening text specifications

**The audio recording**

**Speech rate:** Medium speech rate. Relatively short utterances with some pausing. Rhythmic classroom-style delivery.

**Pattern:** Monologue.

**Articulation:** Natural, with assimilation and reduced forms of words.

**Accent:** Mainly standard British English.

**Content:** Task 1 contains six to seven distinct pieces of information. Task 2 contains a minimum of 10 distinct facts and no more than 12.

**The audio content**

**Subject area:** New factual information of the kind provided in the classroom.

**Type and structure:** Narrative; descriptive; facts with '*but*' and '*because*' connections. Examples include a radio programme, podcast, lecture, teacher talk, documentary.

**Syntactic complexity:** Utterances of up to 10 words. May include some passive verbs. Range of tense and aspect. Use of some subordinate clauses.

**Information density and complexity:** Maximum two ideas per utterance.

**Redundancy and rephrasing:** Natural repetition and rephrasing characteristic of classroom language.

**Speech rate:** Around 150 words per minute.

**Length of recording:**

Task 1 – 1 minute.

Task 2 – 1 minute 15 seconds.

### ISE I Speaking and listening rating scale

This rating scale is used by the examiner to make a judgement of the candidate's performance in the speaking exam (the Topic and the Conversation tasks).

Score	Communicative effectiveness	Interactive listening	Language control	Delivery
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Task fulfilment</li> <li>Appropriacy of contributions /turn-taking</li> <li>Repair strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehension and relevant response</li> <li>Level of understanding</li> <li>Speech rate of examiner interventions</li> <li>Speed and accuracy of response</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Range</li> <li>Accuracy/precision</li> <li>Effects of inaccuracies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intelligibility</li> <li>Lexical stress/intonation</li> <li>Fluency</li> <li>Effects on the listener</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfils the task very well</li> <li>Initiates and responds appropriately, both actively and receptively</li> <li>Maintains and contributes to the interaction by elaborating his/her utterances spontaneously</li> <li>Says or signals in basic ways that he/she did not follow and these signals are always effective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands interventions with little repetition or rephrasing</li> <li>Identifies factual information accurately</li> <li>Has little difficulty in following speech at a normal conversational rate</li> <li>Sometimes responds slowly to consider examiner input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a good range of grammatical structures/lexis to deal with topics at this level</li> <li>Shows a relatively high level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision to deal with most familiar topics</li> <li>Errors occur, but they do not impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intelligible despite some noticeable use of non-standard phonemes</li> <li>Uses lexical stress and intonation appropriately</li> <li>Speaks relatively slowly with some pausing and hesitation</li> <li>Requires some careful listening</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfils the task appropriately</li> <li>Initiates and responds appropriately when prompted</li> <li>Manages to maintain the interaction, but topic development is somewhat dependent on the examiner</li> <li>Says or signals in basic ways that he/she did not follow – although sometimes awkward, these signals are effective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands interventions but may need some repetition or rephrasing</li> <li>Identifies factual information though it may be short on detail</li> <li>Sometimes needs examiner speech slowed down</li> <li>Responds slowly due to some uncertainty about examiner input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses an appropriate range of grammatical structures/lexis to deal with topics at this level</li> <li>Shows a reasonable level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision to deal with most familiar topics</li> <li>Errors are frequent (eg tenses, agreement-markers) but they do not usually impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intelligible despite some noticeable use of non-standard phonemes</li> <li>Generally uses lexical stress and intonation appropriately</li> <li>Generally speaks slowly with some pausing and hesitation</li> <li>Requires some careful listening</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfils the task acceptably with support</li> <li>Acceptably initiates and responds when prompted</li> <li>Manages to maintain the interaction, but topic development is overly dependent on the examiner</li> <li>Says or signals in basic ways that he/she did not follow. Sometimes awkward, and these signals are not always effective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands short interventions but may need repetition or rephrasing</li> <li>Identifies some factual information, possibly incomplete</li> <li>Has difficulty following speech at a normal conversational rate</li> <li>Responds quite slowly due to uncertainty about input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses an acceptable range of grammatical structures/lexis to manage topics at this level, but grammatical/lexical gaps cause some noticeable hesitation and circumlocution</li> <li>Shows an acceptable level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision to deal with most familiar topics</li> <li>Errors are frequent but they do not usually impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mostly intelligible despite some noticeable use of non-standard phonemes</li> <li>Uses lexical stress and intonation acceptably</li> <li>Generally speaks slowly with frequent pausing and hesitation</li> <li>Requires careful listening</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not fulfil the task even with support</li> <li>Does not initiate or respond adequately</li> <li>Does not maintain the interaction sufficiently</li> <li>Contributions are inappropriate and/or overly dependent on the examiner</li> <li>Has difficulty in resolving communication problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has difficulty understanding interventions</li> <li>Identifies some random factual information but without an overall context</li> <li>Does not follow any speech at a normal conversational rate</li> <li>Consistently responds slowly due to difficulty in understanding input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a limited range of grammatical structures/lexis that is not always adequate to deal with topics at this level</li> <li>Does not show an adequate level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision</li> <li>Some or many errors impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally intelligible or sometimes unintelligible – use of non-standard phonemes is evident</li> <li>Uses lexical stress and intonation enough to follow</li> <li>Speaks slowly with frequent and noticeable pausing and hesitation</li> <li>Requires careful listening – may be difficult to follow</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	No performance to assess (candidate does not speak, or does not speak in English).			

## ISE I Independent listening task 2 rating scale

This rating scale is used by the examiner to make a judgement of the candidate's performance in task 2 of the Independent listening task.

CEFR benchmark: Can understand straightforward factual information about common everyday or job-related topics, identifying both general messages and specific details, provided speech is clearly articulated in a generally familiar accent. Can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure etc, including short narratives.

<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies and reports all/almost all key information accurately (main points and supporting detail) (eg nine or more)</li> <li>Shows good understanding of links between key information</li> <li>Responds to questions with promptness</li> <li>Needs no/little repetition or rephrasing of questions</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies and reports the number of key information points required accurately (main points and supporting detail) (eg six to eight)</li> <li>Shows understanding of links between key information</li> <li>Responds to questions with relative promptness</li> <li>May need some repetition or rephrasing of questions</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies and reports some key information points accurately (main points and supporting detail) (eg four to five)</li> <li>Shows limited understanding of links between key information</li> <li>Responds to questions after some hesitation</li> <li>May need some repetition or rephrasing of questions</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies and reports limited number of key information points (eg zero to three)</li> <li>Shows little/no understanding of links between key information</li> <li>Responds to questions only after noticeable hesitation</li> <li>May need extensive repetition and/or rephrasing of questions</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No performance to assess (eg candidate does not speak)</li> </ul>

### ISE I sample exam

#### Topic task

Before the exam, the candidate prepares a topic of his or her own choice which is used as the basis for the discussion.

The examiner signals the start of this task by saying:

*'We're going to start with your topic. Can I have your topic form please?*

*So, we're going to talk about...?'*

Once the candidate has responded, the examiner asks questions to elicit the language functions of the ISE I level.

At the end of the Topic task, the examiner says:

*'Thank you for talking about your topic. Now we're going to talk about something different.'*

#### Conversation task

This is an opportunity for a realistic exchange of information, ideas and opinions.

In this task, the examiner chooses one of the subject areas from the list below:

- ▶ Travel
- ▶ Money
- ▶ Fashion
- ▶ Rules and regulations
- ▶ Health and fitness
- ▶ Learning a foreign language.

The examiner signals the start of this task by saying:

*'Let's talk about...'*

Once the candidate has responded, the examiner asks questions and makes comments to elicit the language functions of the ISE I level.

At the end of the Conversation task, the examiner says:

*'Thank you. Now we're going to move on to the Listening task.'*

#### Independent listening task

The candidate listens to two recordings and responds to questions in conversation with the examiner.

#### Task 1

##### Examiner rubric:

*'You're going to hear a talk about an insect called the crane fly. You will hear the talk twice. As you listen, write down some notes about what you hear, if you want to. Then, I will ask you six questions on some facts about crane flies. Are you ready?'*

#### Audio script for Independent listening task 1

OK, so what's a crane fly? Does anybody know? In fact they're often called 'daddy long legs' and that tells you something about what they look like. They look like rather large mosquitoes but they've got very, very long legs – their legs often break off because they're so long and fragile. There are over 14,000 different species of crane fly in the world but I'm going to concentrate on European crane flies.

The adults hatch in September after they've lived under the ground for almost a year as larvae – that's young insects. If it's been a warm but rainy summer then you get very high numbers of crane flies. Adult crane flies only live for about two weeks. The female adults lay their eggs under the surface of the soil and the cycle begins again. People think that they're not very useful for anything but, in fact animals, such as spiders and birds, like them because they can eat them. They're also useful because in their young form they eat dead plants and so they improve the quality of the soil.



**Answers**

	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
1	What do crane flies look like?	Mosquitoes/have long legs
2	How many species of crane fly are there in the world?	(over) 14,000/allow 40,000 if misheard
3	When do adult crane flies hatch?	September
4	For how long do adult crane flies live?	(About) two weeks
5	Which animals eat crane flies?	Spiders/birds
6	What do young crane flies eat?	(Dead) plants

### Task 2

The examiner reads some instructions to introduce the task. If the candidate asks, the examiner may repeat the instructions and individual questions once.

*'You're going to hear a short talk about science. You will hear the talk twice. The first time, just listen. Then I'll ask you to tell me in a few words what the speaker is talking about. Are you ready?'*

The examiner plays the recording for task 2 once.

After the recording has played once, the examiner says:

*'Now tell me in a few words what the talk is about.'*

After the candidate has responded, the examiner says:

*Now listen to the talk again. Write down some notes about what you hear, if you want to. Then I'll ask you to tell me six pieces of information about how children learn to speak. Are you ready?'*

The examiner plays the recording again. The candidate may make notes while they listen. The examiner then says:

*'Now tell me six pieces of information about how children learn to speak.'*

The candidate reports to the examiner six pieces of information that they have heard in the recording. They may refer to their notes.

While the candidate is responding, the examiner checks which facts the candidate has correctly or incorrectly reported. When the candidate has finished, the examiner selects four follow-up questions from a list in the examiner materials.

### Task 2 sample audio script

Babies begin to speak at about one year old. To start with they learn words very slowly. For some time they only know about 50 words mainly words for objects and people, then when they are about 18 months old their vocabulary suddenly begins to grow very fast. They begin to use verbs and adjectives and they may learn as many as 10 new words every day. Some people say that this is because children suddenly recognise what a word is. They realise that each word refers to something in the real world.

It is strange that children do not need to hear a word many times. Sometimes they have only heard it two or three times before they begin to use it. By the time they are six years old, children can use about 6,000 words and they can understand about 14,000.

### Answers

	Facts from the recording	Sample examiner questions
1	Begin speaking at one	When does a baby begin to speak?
2	Learn words slowly	How quickly does a baby learn new words?
3	Knows 50 words at first	How many words does a one-year-old child know?
4	Knows words for objects and people	What are a child's first words about?
5	Vocabulary grows fast at 18 months	What happens when a child is about 18 months old?
6	Learn 10 new words a day at 18 months	How many words can an 18-month-old child learn a day?
7	Suddenly recognise what a word is/refers to real world	Why does a child's vocabulary suddenly grow at 18 months?
8	Don't have to hear many times	Do children have to hear a word often in order to learn it?
9	Use 6,000 words by the age of six	How many words can a child use at the age of six?
10	Understand 14,000 words by the age of six	How many words can a child understand at the age of six?

## ISE II

**Format:** Three speaking and listening tasks and a listening phase with one task

**Timing:** 20 minutes (18 minute exam plus 2 minute examiner administration time)

**Level:** B2 of the CEFR

A sample ISE II Speaking & Listening exam can be viewed at [trinitycollege.com/ISEII](http://trinitycollege.com/ISEII).

## ISE II task specifications

Topic task	
Task format	<p>The Topic task is an integrated speaking and listening task.</p> <p>The candidate prepares a topic for discussion and may use notes or a mind map to aid the discussion.</p> <p>The candidate may bring a small item such as a picture, an event ticket or medal into the exam room to support the topic discussion.</p>
Timing	4 minutes
Task focus	<p>The candidate is expected to show his or her ability to use the language functions of the ISE level. These functions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Initiating and maintaining the conversation</li> <li>▫ Expressing and expanding ideas and opinions</li> <li>▫ Highlighting advantages and disadvantages</li> <li>▫ Speculating</li> <li>▫ Giving advice</li> <li>▫ Expressing agreement and disagreement</li> <li>▫ Eliciting further information</li> <li>▫ Establishing common ground.</li> </ul>
Examiner role	<p>The examiner invites comments and asks the candidate questions in order to elicit the language functions of ISE II level and co-construct the discussion with the candidate. The examiner may interrupt the candidate where necessary to discourage recitation and encourage a spontaneous conversation.</p>
Assessment	<p>The Topic task and Conversation task are given one score using four criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Communicative effectiveness</li> <li>▫ Interactive listening</li> <li>▫ Language control</li> <li>▫ Delivery.</li> </ul> <p>Please see the Speaking and listening rating scale on page 47 for the full performance descriptors for each criterion and level of performance.</p>

<b>Collaborative task</b>	
Task format	The Collaborative task is an integrated speaking and listening task. The examiner reads a prompt which creates an information gap. The prompt may present a dilemma or opinion. The candidate needs to ask the examiner questions to obtain more information and keep the conversation going.
Timing	4 minutes.
Task focus	<p>The candidate is expected, in this task and throughout the speaking exam, to show their ability to use the language functions of the ISE level. These functions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Initiating and maintaining the conversation</li> <li>▶ Expressing and expanding ideas and opinions</li> <li>▶ Highlighting advantages and disadvantages</li> <li>▶ Speculating</li> <li>▶ Giving advice</li> <li>▶ Expressing agreement and disagreement</li> <li>▶ Eliciting further information</li> <li>▶ Establishing common ground.</li> </ul>
Examiner role	The examiner reads a prompt presenting a dilemma or opinion. The examiner responds naturally to the candidate's questioning and comments, to encourage him or her to keep the conversation going. The examiner will not give away too much information in one turn, or restrict information unnaturally.
Assessment	<p>The Collaborative task, Topic task and Conversation task are given one score using four criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Communicative effectiveness</li> <li>▶ Interactive listening</li> <li>▶ Language control</li> <li>▶ Delivery.</li> </ul> <p>Please see the Speaking and listening rating scale on page 47 for the full performance descriptors for each criterion and level of performance.</p>

**Conversation task**

Task format	The Conversation task is an integrated speaking and listening task. The examiner selects one conversation subject area from the list of the ISE II subject areas and asks the candidate a question to start the conversation.
Timing	2 minutes.
Task focus	<p>The candidate is expected in this task and throughout the speaking exam to show their ability to use the language functions of the ISE level. These functions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▮ Initiating and maintaining the conversation</li> <li>▮ Expressing and expanding ideas and opinions</li> <li>▮ Highlighting advantages and disadvantages</li> <li>▮ Speculating</li> <li>▮ Giving advice</li> <li>▮ Expressing agreement and disagreement</li> <li>▮ Eliciting further information</li> <li>▮ Establishing common ground.</li> </ul>
Examiner role	The examiner uses the list of subject areas and their own test plans to ask questions and elicit the target language functions of the level.
Subject area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▮ Society and living standards</li> <li>▮ Personal values and ideals</li> <li>▮ The world of work</li> <li>▮ National environmental concerns</li> <li>▮ Public figures past and present.</li> </ul>
Assessment	<p>The Conversation task, Collaborative task and Topic task are given one score using four criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▮ Communicative effectiveness</li> <li>▮ Interactive listening</li> <li>▮ Language control</li> <li>▮ Delivery.</li> </ul> <p>Please see the rating scale on page 47 for the full performance descriptors for each criterion and level of performance.</p>

### Independent listening task

Task format	During this task, the candidate listens to a recorded monologue twice. The first time, the examiner asks for the gist of the recording. The second time, the examiner asks a question that requires listening for detail. The examiner asks the question both before and after playing the audio recording, and the candidate responds orally after listening. The candidate may take notes while they are listening for the second time. Notes are optional and are not assessed.
Total task time	8 minutes.
Task focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The candidate shows that they are able to process and report information, including main points and supporting detail</li> <li>▶ Placing information in a wider context</li> <li>▶ Inferring information not expressed explicitly</li> <li>▶ Reporting speaker's intentions</li> <li>▶ Inferring word meaning.</li> </ul>
Examiner role	The examiner plays the recording, reads the instructions and asks questions, including a gist question and a more detailed question (see text of sample exam on page 49). If the candidate asks, the examiner may repeat the instructions and rubric once.
Expected task outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Distinguishing main points and supporting detail</li> <li>▶ Use of world knowledge to interpret what is said</li> <li>▶ Accurate use of inference and reference</li> <li>▶ Interpretation of speaker's standpoint.</li> </ul>
Assessment	This task is assessed using a rating scale of 0-4. The number of relevant points reported correctly is taken into account as well as the promptness with which the candidate responds. Please see the Independent listening rating scale for more detail.
Listening text specifications	<p><b>The audio recording</b></p> <p><b>Speech rate:</b> Conversational speech rate, with only natural pausing. Classroom-style delivery.</p> <p><b>Pattern:</b> Monologue.</p> <p><b>Articulation:</b> Natural, with extensive assimilation and reduced forms of words.</p> <p><b>Accent:</b> Standard British English, general American, some other first language varieties which can quite easily be matched against familiar forms.</p> <p><b>The audio content</b></p> <p><b>Topic:</b> New factual information of the kind provided in the classroom.</p> <p><b>Type and structure:</b> Exposition; discussion. Quite complex links between points of information indicated by connectives. Examples include lectures, podcasts, radio programmes and documentaries.</p> <p><b>Syntactic complexity:</b> Full range of tense and aspect. Subordinate clauses widely used.</p> <p><b>Information density and complexity:</b> Maximum three ideas per utterance.</p> <p><b>Redundancy and rephrasing:</b> Limited repetition and rephrasing characteristic of classroom language and lectures.</p> <p><b>Speech rate:</b> Normal, conversational rate.</p> <p><b>Length of recording:</b> 2 minutes 45 seconds.</p>

## ISE II Speaking and listening rating scale

This rating scale is used by the examiner to make a judgement of the candidate's performance in the speaking exam (the Topic, Collaborative and Conversation tasks).

Score	Communicative effectiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Task fulfilment</li> <li>Appropriacy of contributions /turn-taking</li> <li>Repair strategies</li> </ul>	Interactive listening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehension and relevant response</li> <li>Level of understanding</li> <li>Speech rate of examiner interventions</li> <li>Speed and accuracy of response</li> </ul>	Language control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Range</li> <li>Accuracy/precision</li> <li>Effects of inaccuracies</li> </ul>	Delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intelligibility</li> <li>Lexical stress/intonation</li> <li>Fluency</li> <li>Effects on the listener</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfils the task very well</li> <li>Initiates and responds with effective turn-taking</li> <li>Effectively maintains and develops the interaction</li> <li>Solves communication problems naturally, if any</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands all interventions on a first hearing</li> <li>Interprets examiner's aims and viewpoints accurately by making links with earlier information</li> <li>Makes immediate and relevant responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a wide range of grammatical structures/ lexis flexibly to deal with topics at this level</li> <li>Consistently shows a high level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision</li> <li>Errors do not impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly intelligible</li> <li>Uses focal stress and intonation effectively</li> <li>Speaks promptly and fluently</li> <li>Requires no careful listening</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfils the task appropriately</li> <li>Initiates and responds appropriately</li> <li>Maintains and develops the interaction appropriately (eg expanding and developing ideas, and showing understanding of what the examiner said)</li> <li>Deals with communication problems well</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands most interventions on a first hearing</li> <li>Interprets examiner's aims and viewpoints accurately</li> <li>Makes prompt and relevant response</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses an appropriate range of grammatical structures/ lexis to deal with topics at this level</li> <li>Shows a relatively high level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision</li> <li>Errors do not impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly intelligible despite some use of non-standard phonemes</li> <li>Uses focal stress and intonation appropriately</li> <li>Generally speaks promptly and fluently – occasionally affected by some hesitancy</li> <li>Requires almost no careful listening</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfils the task acceptably with support</li> <li>Initiates and responds acceptably</li> <li>Maintains and develops the interaction, but contributions are not always appropriate and/or are somewhat dependent on the examiner</li> <li>Manages to solve communication problems, but requires more than one attempt and/or does not always do this naturally (eg 'What?')</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Usually understands interventions; occasionally needs clarification</li> <li>Shows occasional uncertainty about examiner's aims or viewpoints</li> <li>Makes relatively prompt responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses an acceptable range of grammatical structures/lexis to manage topics at this level, but grammatical/lexical gaps still cause hesitation and circumlocution</li> <li>Shows an acceptable level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision</li> <li>Most errors do not impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intelligible despite some use of non-standard phonemes</li> <li>Uses focal stress and intonation acceptably</li> <li>Speaks promptly and fluently enough to follow</li> <li>Requires some careful listening</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not fulfil the task even with support</li> <li>Does not initiate or respond adequately</li> <li>Does not maintain and develop the interaction sufficiently</li> <li>Contributions are inappropriate and/or overly dependent on the examiner</li> <li>Has some difficulty in resolving communication problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has difficulty in understanding interventions</li> <li>Frequently misinterprets examiner's aims and viewpoints</li> <li>Responds slowly due to difficulty in understanding input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a limited range of grammatical structures/ lexis that is not always adequate to deal with topics at this level</li> <li>Does not show an adequate level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision</li> <li>Some errors impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally intelligible or sometimes unintelligible – use of non-standard phonemes is sometimes or frequently evident</li> <li>Sometimes or often misuses focal stress and intonation</li> <li>Speaks slowly, sometimes or often halted by hesitancy</li> <li>Requires (some) careful listening</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	No performance to assess (candidate does not speak, or does not speak in English).			

### ISE II Independent listening rating scale

This rating scale is used by the examiner to make a judgement of the candidate's performance in the Independent listening task.

CEFR benchmark: Can understand standard spoken language, live or broadcast, on both familiar and unfamiliar topics normally encountered in personal, social, academic or vocational life. Only extreme background noise, inadequate discourse structure and/or idiomatic usage influences the ability to understand. Can understand the main topics of propositionally and linguistically complex speech on both concrete and abstract topics delivered in a standard dialect, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can follow extended speech and complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar, and the direction of the talk is signposted by explicit markers.

<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identifies and reports all important points relevantly</li><li>Shows full understanding of main points, and how they relate to the message as a whole</li><li>Makes sense of connected English speech rapidly and accurately with confidence</li><li>Fully infers meanings left unstated (eg speaker's viewpoints)</li></ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identifies and reports most points relevantly</li><li>Shows good understanding of main points and is aware of the line of argument linking them</li><li>Makes sense of connected English speech quite rapidly and accurately</li><li>Infers meanings left unstated (eg speaker's viewpoints)</li></ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identifies main points but incompletely or in a general way</li><li>Shows understanding of recording, but does not always grasp the line of argument</li><li>Makes sense of connected English speech with some degree of promptness and accuracy</li><li>Infers some meanings left unstated (eg speaker's viewpoints)</li></ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Does not succeed in identifying main points</li><li>Shows incomplete understanding, limited to factual level information</li></ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>No performance to assess (eg candidate does not speak)</li></ul>



## ISE II sample exam

### Before the exam starts

#### Topic task

Before the exam, the candidate prepares a topic of his or her own choice and in the exam this is used as a basis for the discussion.

The examiner signals the start of this task by saying:

*'We'll start with the topic. What are we going to talk about?'*

Once the candidate has responded, the examiner asks questions to elicit the language functions of the level.

At the end of the Topic task, the examiner says:

*'Thank you for talking about your topic. Now we'll move on to the Collaborative task.'*

#### Collaborative task

An initial prompt from the examiner gives rise to interaction controlled and maintained by the candidate.

The examiner chooses a prompt from one of several. These prompts are changed annually. An example is given below. Before reading the prompt the examiner will read the following instructions:

*'For the next part, I'll tell you something. Then, you have to ask me questions to find out more information and make comments. You need to keep the conversation going. After four minutes, I'll end the conversation. Are you ready?'*

Sample prompt:

*'I have a friend who's studying English. He thinks the best way to improve his language skills is to watch lots of films in English. I'm not sure I agree with him.'*

The candidate is then expected to ask questions and make comments in order to elicit further information from the examiner and develop and maintain the conversation.

At the end of the Collaborative task, the examiner says:

*'Thank you. Now we'll move on to the Conversation task.'*

#### Conversation task

This is an opportunity for a realistic exchange of information, ideas and opinions.

In this task, the examiner chooses one of the subject areas from the list below:

- ▶ Society and living standards
- ▶ Personal values and ideals
- ▶ The world of work
- ▶ National environmental concerns
- ▶ Public figures past and present

The examiner signals the start of this task by saying:

*'Let's talk about...'*

Once the candidate has responded, the examiner asks questions and makes comments to elicit various functions of the level. The candidate and the examiner share responsibility for maintaining the conversation.

When the Conversation task is complete, the examiner says:

*'Thank you. Now we're going to move on to the listening task.'*

#### Independent listening task

The examiner reads some instructions to introduce the task. The candidate may ask for repetition or clarification. Here is an example:

*'You're going to hear a talk about wind energy. You will hear the talk twice. The first time, just listen. Then I'll ask you to tell me generally what the speaker is talking about. Are you ready?'*

The examiner then plays the recording once. After the recording has played once, the examiner will say:

*'Can you tell me in one or two sentences what the speaker was talking about?'*

When the candidate has answered the question, the examiner hands them blank notepaper and says:

*'Now listen to the talk again. This time make some notes as you listen, if you want to. Then I'll ask you to tell me the reasons the speaker gives for and against the use of wind energy.'*

*'Are you ready?'*

The examiner plays the recording again.

After the recording has played for a second time, the examiner says:

*'Now tell me the reasons the speaker gives for and against the use of wind energy. I'll stop you after one minute.'*

The candidate has up to one minute to respond and may refer to their notes.

### **Sample audio script**

When it comes to investing in wind turbines to create electricity, there are various factors that need to be considered. Most obviously, the creation of wind energy is 'clean'. Unlike the use of coal or oil, generating energy from the wind doesn't produce pollutants or require harmful chemicals, and it's this factor which weighs most heavily with those worried about the future of our planet. Moreover, wind will never run out, unlike other natural, non-renewable resources. So it would seem to be a winner in at least two very significant areas.

There are those, however, who continue to argue against the use of wind turbines – but it has to be said their arguments tend to focus on much more detailed issues, and largely ignore the bigger overall picture. It's claimed, for example, that the blades of wind turbines can sometimes be dangerous to wildlife, particularly birds. This may be true, but it seems a small price to pay compared to using other means of power generation, which could end up destroying the habitats of those very same birds. In addition, the sound turbines create can, admittedly, be a problem for those nearby. Perhaps a more significant point, though, and certainly one often mentioned by those who object to turbines, is that it requires a lot of open land to set them up, and cutting down trees seems to defeat the green purpose.

Those who criticise wind energy point out that the wind doesn't always blow consistently. And that's certainly a drawback right now – turbines typically operate at only 30% capacity. If the weather isn't in your favour, you may end up without electricity. And when there is wind, well, severe storms or extremely high winds might damage turbines, especially when they're struck by lightning. As such weather already damages existing methods of power production, however, this line of attack seems to be without much merit.

Ultimately, wind is free. In suitable geographical locations, it's there for the taking. While start-up costs are still off-putting for some, it's undeniable that the overall costs of producing wind energy have been dropping significantly in recent years, and as it gains popularity, it'll continue to become more affordable. In many countries, the costs of purchasing and installing turbines are subsidised by government schemes aimed to promote expansion. There are, no question, a number of problems associated with turbines which still require solutions – but in the longer view, the case for them appears beyond doubt.

**Answers**

Gist: Wind energy may be a good way to reduce damage to the environment, but there are drawbacks. Overall, there is a strong case for using them (any broadly similar formulation is acceptable).

**For**

- Clean energy – no harmful chemicals or pollutants involved/produced
- Will never run out
- Doesn't destroy habitats as other power generation means do
- Essentially free/any associated costs falling

**Against**

- Turbines dangerous to wildlife, especially birds
- Noisy
- Requires large area of open land – may lead to cutting down of trees
- Supply of wind not consistent – turbines operating at 30% capacity
- Bad weather can damage turbines

## ISE III task specifications

### ISE III

**Format:** A speaking exam with four tasks and a listening exam with one task

**Timing:** 25 minutes (23 minute exam plus 2 minute examiner administration time)

**Level:** C1 of the CEFR

A sample ISE III Speaking & Listening exam can be viewed at [trinitycollege.com/ISEIII](http://trinitycollege.com/ISEIII).

### ISE III task specifications

Topic task	
Task type and format	<p>The Topic task is an integrated speaking and listening task.</p> <p>The candidate prepares a topic and delivers a formal presentation on that topic. The candidate is required to produce a handout for the examiner, and may also use visual aids.</p> <p>After the presentation, the candidate and the examiner discuss issues and points arising from the presentation. The candidate should ask the examiner if he or she has any comments or questions.</p>
Timing	<p>4 minutes for presentation.</p> <p>4 minutes for discussion.</p>
Task focus	<p>The candidate is expected, in this task and throughout the speaking exam, to show their ability to use the language functions of the ISE level. These functions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Developing and justifying an argument</li><li>Summarising</li><li>Evaluating options, past actions/course of events, different standpoints</li><li>Deducing and inferring</li><li>Staging</li><li>Hypothesising</li><li>Indicating understanding of points made by examiner</li><li>Establishing common ground/purpose or strategy.</li></ul>
Examiner role	<p>The examiner makes notes during the presentation of ideas, points or issues to discuss after the presentation is finished.</p> <p>During the discussion, the examiner asks questions and makes comments to elicit the language functions of the level.</p>
Assessment	<p>The Topic task, Collaborative task and Conversation task are given one score using four criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Communicative effectiveness</li><li>Interactive listening</li><li>Language control</li><li>Delivery.</li></ul> <p>Please see the Speaking and listening rating scale on page 56 for the full performance descriptors for each criterion and score.</p>

**Collaborative task**

Task format	The Collaborative task is an integrated speaking and listening task. The examiner reads a prompt which creates an information gap. The prompt may express a dilemma or opinion. The candidate needs to ask the examiner questions to obtain more information and keep the conversation going.
Timing	4 minutes.
Task focus	<p>The candidate is expected, in this task and throughout the speaking exam, to show their ability to use the language functions of the ISE level. These functions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Developing and justifying an argument</li> <li>▶ Summarising</li> <li>▶ Evaluating options, past actions/course of events, different standpoints</li> <li>▶ Deducing and inferring</li> <li>▶ Staging</li> <li>▶ Hypothesising</li> <li>▶ Indicating understanding of points made by examiner</li> <li>▶ Establishing common ground/purpose or strategy.</li> </ul>
Examiner role	The examiner reads a prompt presenting a dilemma or opinion. The examiner responds naturally to the candidate's questioning and comments to encourage them to keep the conversation going. The examiner will not give away too much information in one turn, or restrict information unnaturally.
Assessment	<p>The Collaborative task, Topic task and Conversation task are given one score using four criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Communicative effectiveness</li> <li>▶ Interactive listening</li> <li>▶ Language control</li> <li>▶ Delivery.</li> </ul> <p>Please see the Speaking and listening rating scale on page 56 for the full performance descriptors for each criterion and score.</p>

## ISE III task specifications

Conversation task	
Task format	The Conversation task is an integrated speaking and listening task. The examiner selects one conversation subject area from the list of ISE III subject areas and asks the candidate a question or makes a comment to start the conversation.
Timing	3 minutes.
Task focus	<p>The candidate is expected, in this task and throughout the speaking exam, to show their ability to use the language functions of the ISE level. These functions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▮ Developing and justifying an argument</li><li>▮ Summarising</li><li>▮ Evaluating options, past actions/course of events, different standpoints</li><li>▮ Deducing and inferring</li><li>▮ Staging</li><li>▮ Hypothesising</li><li>▮ Indicating understanding of points made by examiner</li><li>▮ Establishing common ground/purpose or strategy.</li></ul>
Examiner role	The examiner uses the list of subject areas and their own test plans to ask questions and elicit the target language functions of the level.
Subject area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▮ Independence</li><li>▮ Ambitions</li><li>▮ Stereotypes</li><li>▮ Role models</li><li>▮ Competitiveness</li><li>▮ Young people's rights</li><li>▮ The media</li><li>▮ Advertising</li><li>▮ Lifestyles</li><li>▮ The arts</li><li>▮ The rights of the individual</li><li>▮ Economic issues.</li></ul>
Assessment	<p>The Conversation task, Collaborative task and Topic task are given one score using four criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▮ Communicative effectiveness</li><li>▮ Interactive listening</li><li>▮ Language control</li><li>▮ Delivery.</li></ul> <p>Please see the Speaking and listening rating scale on page 56 for the full performance descriptors for each criterion and score.</p>

**Independent listening task**

Task format	During this task, the candidate listens to a recorded monologue twice. The first time, the examiner asks for the gist of the recording. The second time, the examiner asks a question that requires listening for detail. The examiner asks the question both before and after playing the audio recording, and the candidate responds orally after listening. The candidate may take notes while they are listening for the second time. Notes are optional and are not assessed.
Timing	8 minutes.
Task focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The candidate shows that they are able to place information in a wider context, clearly distinguishing main and subordinate points</li> <li>▶ Recognising the speaker's line of argument</li> <li>▶ Inferring information and links between points of information that are not expressed explicitly</li> <li>▶ Interpreting the speaker's attitude</li> <li>▶ Inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words.</li> </ul>
Examiner role	The examiner plays the recording, reads the instructions and asks questions, including a gist question and a more detailed question (see sample exam on page 58). If the candidate asks, the examiner may repeat the instructions and rubric once.
Expected task outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Reporting a line of argument</li> <li>▶ Interpreting what a speaker says and how he/she says it</li> <li>▶ Very accurate use of inference and reference</li> <li>▶ Identifying speaker attitude and perspective</li> <li>▶ Evaluating speaker's comments.</li> </ul>
Assessment	This task is assessed using a rating scale of 0-4. The number of relevant points and supporting details reported correctly is taken into account as well as the promptness with which the candidate responds. Please see the Independent listening rating scale for more detail.
Listening text specifications	<p><b>The audio recording</b>  <b>Speech rate:</b> Conversational speech rate, with natural speeding up and slowing down. Classroom-style delivery.  <b>Pattern:</b> Monologue.  <b>Articulation:</b> Natural, with some words foregrounded but others of low prominence.  <b>Accent:</b> May include varieties that can be processed using standard British and general American as a point of reference.</p> <p><b>The audio content</b>  <b>Topic:</b> Information generally of a discursive nature.  <b>Type and structure:</b> Exposition; discussion which weighs points against each other. Quite complex links between points of information, which sometimes have to be inferred. Examples include lectures, complex discussions, debates, podcasts, radio programmes and documentaries.  <b>Syntactic complexity:</b> Full range. Subordinate clauses widely used.  <b>Information density and complexity:</b> Quite information dense.  <b>Redundancy and rephrasing:</b> Limited repetition and rephrasing common to a teaching style.  <b>Speech rate:</b> Normal, conversational rate.  <b>Length of recording:</b> 2 minutes 45 seconds.</p>

## ISE III Speaking and listening rating scale

This rating scale is used by the examiner to make a judgement of the candidate's performance in the Speaking exam (the Topic, Collaborative and Conversation tasks).

Score	Communicative effectiveness	Interactive listening	Language control	Delivery
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Task fulfilment</li> <li>Appropriacy of contributions /turn-taking</li> <li>Repair strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehension and relevant response</li> <li>Level of understanding</li> <li>Speech rate of examiner interventions</li> <li>Speed and accuracy of response</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Range</li> <li>Accuracy/precision</li> <li>Effects of inaccuracies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intelligibility</li> <li>Lexical stress/intonation</li> <li>Fluency</li> <li>Effects on the listener</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfils the task very well</li> <li>Initiates and responds with effective turn-taking</li> <li>Contributes to effective topic maintenance and development by fully incorporating the examiner's utterances into their own contributions</li> <li>Solves communication problems naturally, if any</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands interventions including those that are complex in grammar or ideas</li> <li>Interprets examiner aims and attitude accurately, following the line of argument</li> <li>Responses are immediate and always to the point</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a wide range of grammatical structures/ lexis flexibly to deal with topics at this level</li> <li>Consistently maintains a high level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision effortlessly, even when using complex language</li> <li>Occasional minor slips may occur but difficult to spot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly intelligible</li> <li>Uses focal stress and intonation very effectively</li> <li>Effortlessly speaks very promptly and fluently</li> <li>Requires no careful listening</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfils the task appropriately</li> <li>Initiates and responds with effective turn-taking</li> <li>Contributes to effective topic maintenance and development by linking contributions to those of the examiner (eg summarising, indicating understanding of points made by the examiner, establishing common ground in the interaction)</li> <li>Solves communication problems naturally, if any</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands all examiner interventions on a first hearing</li> <li>Interprets examiner aims and attitude accurately, following the line of argument</li> <li>Immediate and relevant responses to interventions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses an appropriate range of grammatical structures/ lexis to deal with topics at this level</li> <li>Consistently maintains a high level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision</li> <li>Occasional minor slips occur</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly intelligible</li> <li>Uses focal stress and intonation effectively</li> <li>Speaks promptly and fluently</li> <li>Requires no careful listening</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfils the task acceptably</li> <li>Initiates and responds with effective turn-taking</li> <li>Maintains and develops the interaction appropriately, while indicating understanding of what the examiner has said</li> <li>Solves communication problems naturally, if any</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands most interventions on a first hearing</li> <li>Interprets examiner aims and attitude by making links with earlier information</li> <li>Prompt responses to the examiner showing relatively quick understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses an acceptable range of grammatical structures/ lexis to deal with topics at this level</li> <li>Consistently maintains a high level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision</li> <li>Occasional minor slips occur</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly intelligible</li> <li>Uses focal stress and intonation appropriately</li> <li>Generally speaks promptly and fluently</li> <li>Requires no careful listening</li> </ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not fulfil the task</li> <li>Initiates and responds adequately</li> <li>Maintains and develops the interaction acceptably, but does not usually link contributions to those of the examiner</li> <li>Solves communication problems appropriately or acceptably, if any</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appears to understand interventions but does not always respond appropriately</li> <li>Occasionally digresses from the examiner's aims</li> <li>Occasional hesitation in order to make sense of examiner input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a range of grammatical structures/ lexis that is not always adequate to deal with topics at this level</li> <li>Does not show an adequate level of grammatical accuracy and lexical precision at this level</li> <li>Some or many errors may occur</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May not always be clearly intelligible</li> <li>Does not always use focal stress and intonation appropriately</li> <li>Does not always speak promptly and fluently</li> <li>May require some careful listening</li> </ul>
0	No performance to assess (candidate does not speak, or does not speak in English).			



### ISE III Independent listening rating scale

This rating scale is used by the examiner to make a judgement of the candidate's performance in the Independent listening task.

CEFR benchmark: Can understand enough to follow extended speech on abstract and complex topics beyond his/her own field, though he/she may need to confirm occasional details, especially if the accent is unfamiliar. Can recognise a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, appreciating register shifts. Can follow extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly.

<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies and reports all important points and supporting details rapidly and accurately with confidence</li> <li>Shows complete understanding of main points, including relevance to message as a whole</li> <li>Identifies speaker's attitude and line of argument</li> <li>Evaluates speaker's arguments in a sophisticated way</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies and reports most main points and supporting details rapidly and accurately</li> <li>Shows good understanding of main points, including relevance to message as a whole</li> <li>Recognises speaker's attitude and line of argument</li> <li>Evaluates speaker's arguments</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies main points and reports them briefly but accurately</li> <li>Shows good understanding of information in recording, but not always their relevance to message as a whole</li> <li>Does not always grasp speaker's attitude or line of argument</li> <li>Does not always evaluate speaker's arguments</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies main points but incompletely or in a rather general way</li> <li>Shows some understanding of information in recording, but does not differentiate between major and minor points</li> <li>Does not recognise speaker's attitude or line of argument</li> <li>Does not evaluate speaker's arguments</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No performance to assess (eg candidate does not speak)</li> </ul>

### ISE III sample exam

#### Topic task

This task gives the candidate the opportunity to display their command of the language of the grade while delivering a formal oral presentation on self-selected and personally-relevant topics. The Topic discussion task is where the candidate and examiner have an authentic discussion on the ideas and opinions given in the formal topic presentation.

The examiner will signal the start of this task by saying:

*'We'll start with the topic presentation. Please begin when you are ready.'*

The examiner will make notes on the content of the presentation for the subsequent discussion. The candidate concludes the presentation by inviting the examiner to ask questions or comment, and the examiner signals the start of the topic discussion task by saying:

*'Thank you. Now I'd like to discuss some of the points you have made.'*

Once the candidate has responded, the examiner asks questions and makes comments to elicit the language functions of the ISE level.

At the end of the Topic task, the examiner says:

*'Thank you. That was interesting. Now we'll move on to the Collaborative task.'*

The examiner then signals the start of the Collaborative task as below.

#### Collaborative task

An initial prompt from the examiner gives rise to interaction controlled and maintained by the candidate.

The examiner chooses one of several prompts. These prompts are changed annually. An example is given below. Before reading the prompt the examiner will read the following instructions:

*'For the next part, I'll tell you something. Then, you have to ask me questions to find out more information and make comments. It's your responsibility to maintain the conversation. Are you ready?'*

Sample prompt:

*'In the last few years, many previously unspoilt regions of the world have been opened up to tourism. I'm concerned about the long-term effects of this.'*

The candidate is then expected to ask questions and make comments in order to elicit further information from the examiner and develop the conversation, using the language functions of the ISE level.

At the end of the Collaborative task, the examiner says:

*'Thank you. Now we'll move on to the Conversation task.'*

#### Conversation task

This is an opportunity for a realistic exchange of information, ideas and opinions.

In this task, the examiner will choose one of the subject areas from the list below:

- ▮ Independence
- ▮ Ambitions
- ▮ Stereotypes
- ▮ Role models
- ▮ Competitiveness
- ▮ Young people's rights
- ▮ The media
- ▮ Advertising
- ▮ Lifestyles
- ▮ The arts
- ▮ The rights of the individual
- ▮ Economic issues

The examiner signals the start of this task by saying:

*'Let's talk about...'*

Once the candidate has responded, the examiner asks questions and makes comments to elicit various functions of the ISE level. The candidate and the examiner share responsibility for maintaining the conversation.

When the Conversation task is complete, the examiner says:

*'Thank you. Now we'll move on to the Listening task.'*

### **Independent listening task**

The examiner reads some instructions to introduce the task. The candidate may ask for repetition or clarification.

Below is an example from the sample exam:

*'You're going to hear part of a radio programme about routine. You will hear the talk twice. The first time, just listen. Then I'll ask you to tell me generally what the speaker is talking about. Are you ready?'*

The examiner then plays the recording once. After the recording has played once, the examiner says:

*'Now can you tell me in one or two sentences what the speaker was talking about?'*

When the candidate has answered the question, the examiner will hand them blank notepaper and a pen/pencil and will say:

*'Now listen to the talk again. This time make some notes as you listen, if you want to. Then I'll ask you to tell me the different ways the speaker evaluates the need for routine in our lives and whether you think he comes to a conclusion. Are you ready?'*

The examiner plays the recording again.

After the recording has played a second time, the examiner says:

*'Now tell me the different ways the speaker evaluates the need for routine in our lives and whether you think he comes to a conclusion. I'll stop you after one minute.'*

The candidate has up to one minute to respond and may refer to their notes.

### Sample audio script

In my recent book, I discuss the subject of routine and the effects it has on our lives. Actually, my original idea was to look at the working methods of successful creative people like writers and artists to see if there were any helpful lessons to be drawn. The more people I examined, the clearer it became that there was one thing the vast majority of them had in common: they had a regular working routine and stuck to it strictly, even obsessively. Their habits and routines often ended up being more like rituals. To take one example, the composer Beethoven apparently used to start each day with a cup of strong coffee made with exactly sixty coffee beans, which he insisted on counting out personally. And that's by no means the oddest ritual I discovered.

Obviously we don't all have to behave like that, but it does appear that routine is something most of us need. Most humans function better when they have some kind of structure to their lives. In fact, without routines for day-to-day activities, nothing much would get done. Transport wouldn't run on time, schools and workplaces would be in a permanent state of chaos, and so on.

So, society as a whole seems to favour, or even require, people with regular lifestyles. But there's a growing body of research suggesting that too much routine is bad for personal well-being, and it's this aspect that much of the book is concerned with. Breaking up your routine and doing something new, it appears, increases your happiness. It's not just a case of getting bored: routine also increases our sense of time passing by too quickly. When nothing new is happening, we're not so conscious of events and simply don't notice the days and weeks slipping away.

There's also an interesting connection between time and memory, or more exactly two kinds of connection. Firstly, a lot of what people accept as naturally increasing forgetfulness as they get older is actually more to do with their lives becoming predictable. It's not so much that they forget things that have happened but that they didn't really notice them in the first place because they'd become so automatic. The other thing that strikes a chord with me as I get older is the explanation for why childhood memories seem so vivid. When you're young, everything is new and your brain is working overtime to take everything in, so your impressions of events are much more memorable. What we need to do is to try and recapture that sense of newness by disrupting routines and actively seeking out new experiences.

### Answer key – examiner checklist

Gist: Routine is beneficial to some extent. But it is important to break routine and try new things for happiness and memory (any broadly similar formulation acceptable).

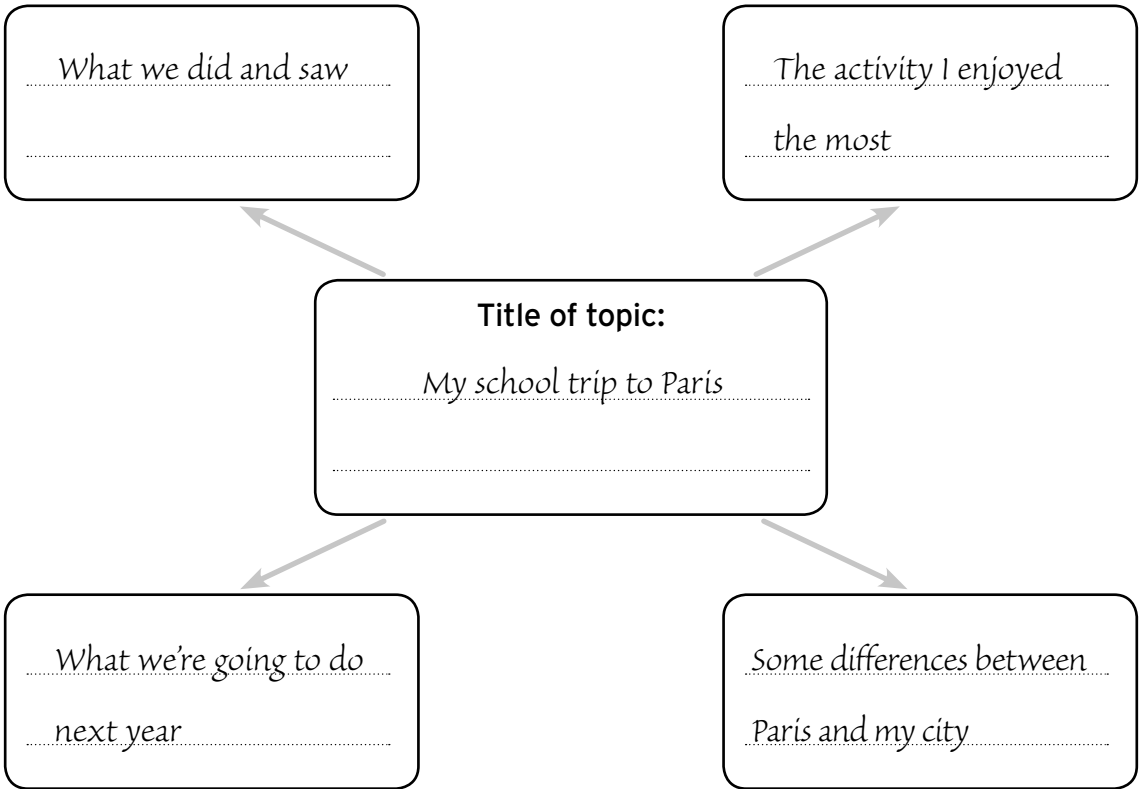
- ▶ Successful people known to have routine, for example, Beethoven
- ▶ Not always healthy though – can become like a ritual
- ▶ Some routine is vital – transport, schools, etc
- ▶ Also, people seem to need some routine to give structure to lives
- ▶ Society needs people to have routine
- ▶ BUT – doing new things is important for happiness/well-being – it means time doesn't seem to pass so quickly
- ▶ Also, newness important for forming and maintaining memory – memory loss in older age can be due to predictability
- ▶ Conclusion? Speaker appears to conclude that a degree of routine is important for individuals and society as a whole but that it is very important to avoid becoming too predictable.

# Appendices

Appendix 1 – Sample topic forms

**TRINITY**  
COLLEGE LONDON

**Integrated Skills in English Topic Form –  
ISE Foundation**



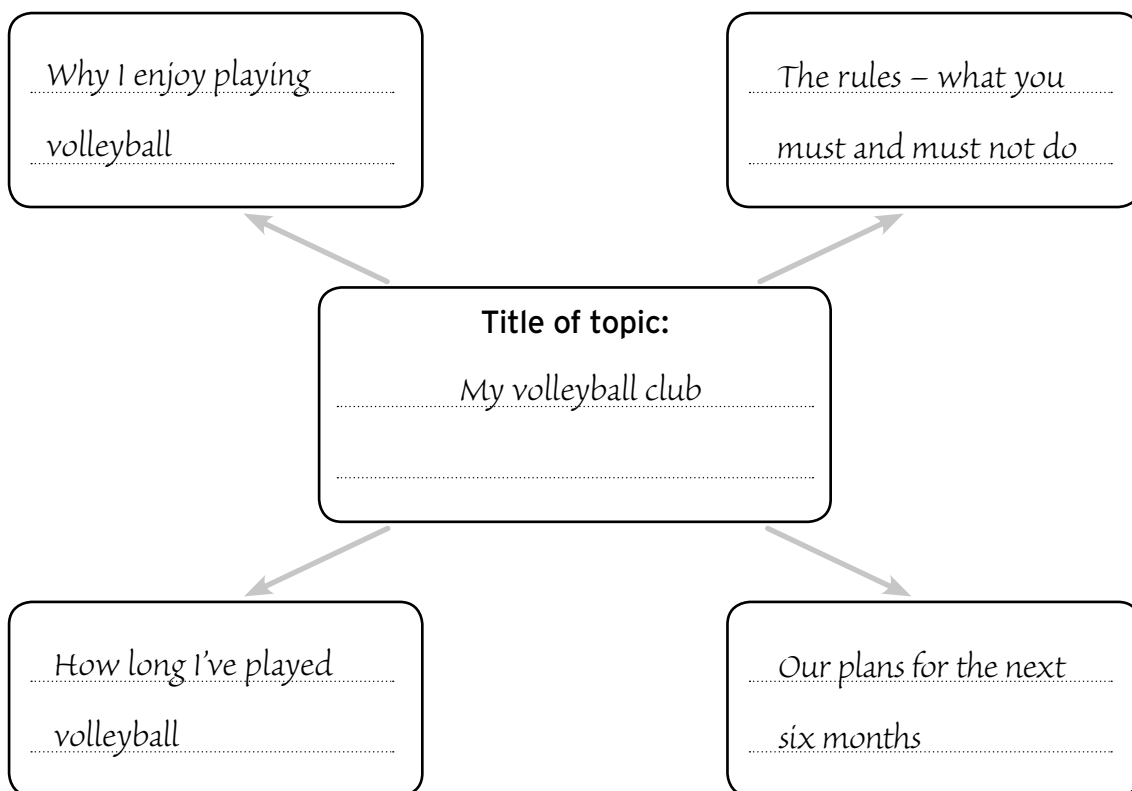
The information on this form must be presented to the examiner during the exam.

Please note, candidates do not have to use the Trinity topic form, they can make their own with four points for discussion.

# TRINITY

COLLEGE LONDON

## Integrated Skills in English Topic Form – ISE I



The information on this form must be presented to the examiner during the exam.

Please note, candidates do not have to use the Trinity topic form, they can make their own with four points for discussion.

### Appendix 2 – Language functions

Below is a complete list of all the language functions for each level of the ISE exam.

#### ISE A1

- ▮ Stating simple facts
- ▮ Understanding instructions
- ▮ Giving personal information about present circumstances
- ▮ Understanding directions and indicating locations
- ▮ Understanding and expressing very basic likes/dislikes/preferences
- ▮ Asking questions for things, help
- ▮ Describing familiar things, eg people, objects including colours and position
- ▮ Understanding and informing about possessions
- ▮ Repairing communication at simplest level.

#### ISE Foundation

- ▮ Giving personal information about present and past circumstances/activities
- ▮ Describing routines
- ▮ Expressing ability and inability
- ▮ Describing future plans
- ▮ Expressing likes and dislikes
- ▮ Describing people, objects and places
- ▮ Expressing simple comparisons
- ▮ Asking for information (eg simple questions about everyday life)
- ▮ Asking for clarification
- ▮ Responding to requests for clarification.

#### ISE I

In addition to the language functions listed for the previous level, the candidate is expected to meet the language functions listed below during the exam.

- ▮ Describing past actions in the indefinite and recent past
- ▮ Describing the future, informing and expressing intentions
- ▮ Predicting and expressing certainty and uncertainty
- ▮ Giving reasons, opinions and preferences
- ▮ Expressing obligation
- ▮ Asking for information and opinions.

#### ISE II

In addition to the language functions listed for the previous levels, the candidate is expected to meet the language functions listed below during the exam.

- ▮ Initiating and maintaining the conversation
- ▮ Expressing and expanding ideas and opinions
- ▮ Highlighting advantages and disadvantages
- ▮ Speculating
- ▮ Giving advice
- ▮ Expressing agreement and disagreement
- ▮ Eliciting further information
- ▮ Establishing common ground.



### ISE III

In addition to the language functions listed for the previous levels, the candidate is expected to meet the language functions listed below during the exam.

- Developing and justifying an argument
- Summarising
- Evaluating options, past actions/course of events, different standpoints
- Deducing and inferring
- Staging
- Hypothesising
- Indicating understanding of points made by examiner
- Establishing common ground/purpose or strategy.

### Appendix 3 – Regulations and policies

#### Safeguarding and child protection

Trinity is fully committed to safeguarding and protecting the candidates that we work with. All posts, including examiners, are subject to a safer recruitment process, including the disclosure of criminal records and vetting checks. Our safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and promote safeguarding and safer working practice across all parts of our work.

#### Equal opportunities

Trinity is committed to providing equality of opportunity and treatment for all, and will not unlawfully or unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly on the basis of any characteristic.

#### Reasonable adjustment

Trinity is committed to creating an inclusive environment where candidates with special needs are able to demonstrate their skills and feel welcomed. We aim to make our exams accessible to all. We treat each candidate individually when considering how we can achieve this aim, recognising that requirements vary. Candidates can be assured that we do not compromise on the standard of marking or allow the quality of exams to be affected in any way.

All provision is tailored to the particular needs of each candidate. In order to be most beneficial, as full an explanation as possible of the required provision should be given. The need and request for provision should be made on the appropriate form available to download from [trinitycollege.com/language-csn](http://trinitycollege.com/language-csn). For enquiries please contact [language-csn@trinitycollege.com](mailto:language-csn@trinitycollege.com).

#### Exam monitoring

Trinity examiners will audio record oral exams for monitoring and research purposes. All exams are recorded unless stated otherwise. Trinity reserves the right to allow Trinity monitors into the exam room while the exam is in progress in order to observe the conduct of the exams. Recordings of exams are retained at Trinity's central office and not made available to centres or the candidate.

These procedures are an essential feature of Trinity's commitment to the consistency of marking and administration by its examiners and are in no way detrimental to the candidate. Every effort will be made to give advance notice of such monitoring sessions and arrangements will be discussed with the Registered Centre involved wherever possible. Entrance for the Trinity exams constitutes acceptance of all the quality assurance procedures.

In normal circumstances, no other person is permitted to be present in the exam room. Special arrangements apply, with prior authorisation, in cases where candidates with special needs/disabilities require assistance.

#### Exam delivery

Exams take place at registered exam centres throughout the world.

Tests for UK Visas, British Citizenship or Leave to Remain have to take place in a registered Secure English Language Test (SELT) centre in the UK.

Trinity works with the centre to ensure that the exam session is delivered at the mutual convenience of the centre and the examiner. During the planning process, the centre may be approached regarding alternative dates for delivery.

Trinity reserves the right not to conduct an exam session in the following circumstances:

- ▮ exam entries are not received prior to the specified closing dates. Closing dates are available from your National/Area Representative or Trinity's central office
- ▮ exam fees are not paid in full by the closing date
- ▮ the minimum fee required by Trinity in order to cover the costs of an examiner visiting an exam venue is not met. Details of the minimum fee required can be obtained from your National/Area Representative or Trinity's central office
- ▮ centres have not used the correct fees for their exam session.

Trinity takes every effort to ensure the delivery of its exams on the dates and at the locations planned. However, there may on occasion be exceptional circumstances that mean we are not able to meet our commitment. This would include, for example, lack of examiner availability, national strikes, labour disputes, industrial disruption, natural disasters, widespread disruption of international travel, terrorist attacks, acts of war or pandemics.

### **Data protection**

Trinity is registered as a Data Controller with the Information Commissioner's Office in the United Kingdom under data protection legislation. Please see [trinitycollege.com/data-protection](https://trinitycollege.com/data-protection) for the most up-to-date information about Trinity's data protection procedures and policies.

### **Customer service**

Trinity is committed to providing a high-quality service for all our users from initial enquiry through to certification. Full details of our customer service commitment can be found at [trinitycollege.com/customer-service](https://trinitycollege.com/customer-service).

### **Exam infringements**

All exam infringements will be referred directly to Trinity's central office by the examiner. Exam reports may be withheld until the outcome of any referral has been considered by Trinity. Depending on the severity of the infringement, marks may be deducted or, in extreme cases, the exam may be invalidated.

### **Malpractice**

Trinity requires its registered exam centres to report any suspected malpractice by candidates, teachers or examiners. In situations where a centre is found to be inadequate or to be guilty of malpractice, either in terms of provision of facilities or in administration, the exam centre may be required to suspend all of its activities relating to Trinity exams until the cause of the problem is identified and rectified, if appropriate. In extreme circumstances, the centre may have its registered centre status withdrawn.

In the very rare cases or circumstances where a centre or individual may be suspected of malpractice, Trinity will aim to minimise any inconvenience caused to any affected candidate, and would like to thank candidates, teachers and centre staff for their kind co-operation in reporting any suspected incident of cheating, thereby assisting Trinity in upholding the quality and integrity of its exam process.

### **Results review and appeals procedure**

Anyone who wishes to question their exam result should refer to [trinitycollege.com/results-enquiry](https://trinitycollege.com/results-enquiry) for full details of our results review and appeals process.

### Appendix 4 – Regulatory information

Qualification	Regulated title	Qualification number
Integrated Skills in English (ISE) A1	TCL Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 1) (ISE) (A1)	610/3190/2
Integrated Skills in English (ISE) Foundation	TCL Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 2) (ISE) (A2)	601/5514/0
Integrated Skills in English (ISE) I	TCL Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 3) (ISE) (B1)	601/5515/2
Integrated Skills in English (ISE) II	TCL Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International (ISE) (B2)	601/5516/4
Integrated Skills in English (ISE) III	TCL Level 2 Certificate in ESOL International (ISE) (C1)	601/5517/6
Integrated Skills in English (ISE) IV*	TCL Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International (ISE) (C2)	500/3827/8

#### Qualification type

Trinity's Integrated Skills in English (ISE) assesses the four main language skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. ISE tests students' ability to interact in English through the use of integrated reading and writing tasks and integrated speaking and listening tasks.

For the ISE A1 to ISE III levels, there are two exam modules you need to pass to get an ISE qualification: ISE Reading & Writing and ISE Speaking & Listening:

- ▶ ISE Reading & Writing is assessed via an externally assessed exam sat under exam conditions
- ▶ ISE Speaking & Listening is assessed via a one-to-one, oral assessment between the candidate and an examiner.

#### Objectives

Trinity's ISE qualifications provide evidence of the candidates' proficiency across four skills in English language: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Candidates may use an ISE qualification to provide evidence of their English language ability across the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) levels. ISE is suitable for any candidate (young person or adult) either in or entering into an educational context. ISE has been designed to reflect the type of tasks and texts students encounter within the educational domain.

#### Total qualification time

The time it takes each candidate to prepare for these qualifications is dependent on where the learning is taking place and on the needs and experience of the individual candidate. The total qualification time (TQT) is a guide and is split as follows:

Qualification	Guided learning hours (GLH)	Independent learning hours (ILH)	Total qualification time (TQT)
Integrated Skills in English (ISE) A1	200	40	240
Integrated Skills in English (ISE) Foundation	200	40	240
Integrated Skills in English (ISE) I	200	60	260
Integrated Skills in English (ISE) II	200	80	280
Integrated Skills in English (ISE) III	200	100	300
Integrated Skills in English (ISE) IV	200	120	320

\* ISE IV has a different format – see [trinitycollege.com/ISEIV](http://trinitycollege.com/ISEIV).

### Assessment methods

ISE A1 to ISE III Reading & Writing is assessed using dichotomous scoring and rating scales. ISE A1 to ISE III Speaking & Listening is assessed using rating scales. One Independent Listening task in ISE Foundation and ISE I is scored.

The overall result for each unit is taken by converting the total score into one of the following results:

- ▮ Distinction
- ▮ Merit
- ▮ Pass
- ▮ Fail.

Trinity is committed to ensuring that the standard of each qualification remains consistent over time, and so reserves the right to make appropriate adjustments to published grade thresholds and/or methods of aggregating marks.

### Attainment levels

Achievement of ISE A1 to ISE IV aligns with the levels of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001).

### Recognition

Trinity College London is an international exam board regulated by Ofqual (Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation) in England, CCEA Regulation in Northern Ireland and by Qualifications Wales. Trinity's Graded Examinations in Spoken English are regulated by these authorities within the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF), and are recognised by other education authorities in many countries around the world.

Trinity's Integrated Skills in English exam levels, ISE Foundation to ISE IV are also audited by the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) and hold the ALTE Q mark.

Trinity ISE exams conducted at registered SELT centres are accepted by the UKVI for some UK visa categories.

### Minimum age and other entry requirements

The intended candidate is a young person or adult, typically at secondary school or college who is using English as a second or foreign language as part of their studies to develop their skills and improve their knowledge of a range of subject areas. The typical ISE candidate is aged between 11 and 19, but may be older.

Students do not need to have taken any prior exams in order to take any level of ISE. Entry for a higher level of ISE does not require candidates to have passed lower levels and candidates may enter at the level they feel is appropriate for their needs and experience.

Trinity is committed to making its exams accessible to all, and each candidate is treated individually when considering how assessments can be adapted for those with special needs.

### Progression

While, for some learners, Integrated Skills in English exams represent personal goals and objectives, they can also be used as a progression route towards entrance to university where a specified level in English is required for study, progression to a higher level of English study, preparation for further or higher education, where English-medium teaching or Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) methodology may be in use, to provide proof of language level to prospective employers, or for immigration.

