

ANEXO 1

Choosing suitable venues and exam rooms

All exam venues must meet Cambridge ESOL's minimum requirements and must be fit for purpose. When selecting a venue, make sure:

- It has suitable secure storage facilities for exam materials.
- The rooms are big enough for all your candidates, bearing in mind there must be at least 1.25m between candidates (from the centre of each desk in each direction).
- There is suitable equipment for Listening tests.
- The general ambience is suitable e.g. not too noisy, light enough, comfortable temperature, clean and is conducive to candidates performing at their best.
- The building is available on the exam day:
 - Is it open on the day you wish to run the exam?
 - Can you book the room(s) in advance?
 - Do you have access to the building yourself? Will you need building staff to give you access on the day?
 - Are there any other events planned there that day that could disrupt the exam?
- The location is accessible for candidates.
- There is disabled access to the exam room and to PCs, or alternative arrangements, e.g. a ground floor room (if needed).

If your centre has open status, and is also based at a teaching institution, you must as far as possible use neutral premises if you are providing facilities for large preparation centres.

For instructions on how to set up exam rooms on the day, see the relevant *Exam Day Booklet*. To download this from CentreNet, go to Exam Admin, and click on General, Business and Professional. This booklet must be available in the exam room during the exam.

Computer-based exam rooms



In addition to the above, for computer-based tests you need to ensure that conditions are suitable. You must also ensure that no candidate's work can be overseen by other candidates.

When selecting a venue, make sure:

- The exam room has enough PCs for the number of candidates, including a designated Administration workstation. The minimum distance between the edge of one screen and the edge of the next should be 1.25 metres, unless the monitors are positioned back to back or separated by dividers high enough to prevent other candidates from overlooking the work of others.
- There are enough headphones in good working order.
- Conditions are suitable for candidates to perform at their best. This includes providing adequate lighting in the room while making sure there is no glare on the screens and that there is enough ventilation or temperature control in the room to compensate for the heat generated by the equipment.
- Where possible, equipment such as screens and chairs should be adjustable, and you may wish to provide foot rests and special mouse mats. You must also take into consideration the laws in your country regarding health and safety and computers. You must provide adequate space at each workstation to enable candidates to make notes.

Listening test rooms

Choose a suitable venue and make sure you check the room and equipment in advance and on the day of the test. Key points to cover when choosing a room and checking its suitability include:

- Listen for reverberation caused by large rooms, unoccupied space, high ceilings, etc. Room acoustics will vary, depending on whether a room is empty or full. It's advisable to try out the sound system with people in the room, rather than only trying it in an empty room.
- Take note of sound direction and the distance between speakers and candidates.
- If multiple loudspeakers are available, check the best positioning of these in each room to ensure an even distribution of sound throughout the room.
- If a language laboratory is used, the supervisor must be satisfied that the invigilator's view of candidates is unobstructed. If necessary, arrange for extra invigilators.
- If wireless headphones are used, they must be infrared, not FM wireless. You must take steps to ensure that the risks of interception of Listening tests are minimised, for example, by restricting access to the immediate vicinity of the exam room while Listening tests are in progress. If you want to use any other types of headphone, please contact ESOL Helpdesk to discuss it.
- All sets of headphones to be used in Listening tests administered in language laboratories must be tested before the exam date.
- Check the possibility of noise outside the exam room as well as in it. For example, if there is a noisy road outside, will this make it hard for candidates to hear the test?
- Where possible, hold a practice test in the rooms to be used, to allow a more accurate assessment of the most appropriate tone and volume settings to use under exam conditions.
- Sound reproduction can often be improved when bass is reduced, treble boosted and volume is kept as low as is reasonable for the CD to be heard clearly in all parts of the room.
- If playback facilities are equipped with a 'Dolby' noise reduction system, it should be switched to the 'off' position.

In addition, you must check the quality of the recording and playback equipment in any premises where the Listening tests are to be taken, including speakers, to ensure that technical specifications required for the test can be met (e.g. inbuilt pause facility, playback speed, sound reproduction/quality, volume capacity, etc.). Where these do not meet requirements, you must take remedial action before the exam.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the audio equipment is kept in good working order. Hardware, including headphones, should be regularly maintained and checked to minimise the risk of equipment failure.

These checks are of vital importance and should help you avoid the need to request special consideration for any candidates who are unable to hear the test properly.

Speaking test rooms

When choosing suitable Speaking exam venues, you must consider the following:

- The Speaking test room must be able to accommodate up to 4 or 5 people.
- Where possible, any exam with younger candidates, such as YLE, KET for Schools, PET for Schools or FCE for Schools, should be held in rooms with interior glass windows or doors, taking care that the test material is not visible to any waiting candidate.
- Holding the Speaking test in a hotel bedroom is unsuitable. However, if no other solution can be found, then the bed must be removed and the room arranged as shown in the *Speaking Test Instructions* or *YLE Exam Day Booklet*.
- The whole examining area should be situated as far as possible from noise and disturbance. The basic requirements are separate rooms with adequate lighting and ventilation for the Speaking test, and they should be checked for suitable temperature and cleanliness.
- It must also be equipped with a suitably sized table and enough chairs, arranged as shown in the *Speaking Test Instructions* or *YLE Exam Day Booklet*.
- Tests must not be held simultaneously in a shared room.
- You must have a separate waiting/marshalling area for candidates about to take their test.
- The waiting/marshalling area should be a central administrative area and must be some distance away from the exam rooms. It must also be supervised.