

GUIDELINES FOR THE INTERLOCUTORS – DO’S AND DON’Ts

DO’s	DON’Ts
BE NICE, POLITE, PLEASANT, ENCOURAGING AND ATTENTIVE	DON’T BE UNPLEASANT, IRONIC, DISAPPROVING, DISAGREEABLE OR PATRONISING
Keep the suggested time limits, Give the student enough time/opportunity to speak.	Don’t start off “rattling” to the student. Never ask more than one question at a time. Don’t talk more than necessary: refrain from making unnecessary comments.
Maintain eye contact with the student when talking to him/her. Remember and use the student’s name.	Don’t look at the task sheet for a long time or shuffle your papers when the student is talking to you.
Speak clearly.	Never raise your voice.
Receive mistakes and weaknesses without comments.	Don’t give any indication of assessment of student performance. Don’t correct or give “lectures”. Don’t let your face show very strong emotions (either positive or negative), resulting from student’s performance.
Give encouraging and positive backchannel signals (e.g. <i>umm, aha, right ...</i>)	Don’t interrupt or finish what the student wants to say.
Be discrete when making notes or checking time.	Never remind the student that they are being examined.
Use global questions for elicitation.	Do not ask questions that require background knowledge. Avoid ambiguous and embarrassing questions.
Use referential/genuine questions.	Avoid asking display questions (i.e. questions to which the answer is already known.)
Ask <i>wh</i> -questions whenever possible. For example, ask the student to justify his/her opinion (e.g. <i>Why do you think...?</i>)	Avoid asking <i>yes/no</i> questions.
Interrupt the student’s talk as and when necessary to make the conversation suitable interactive.	Don’t let students give a monologue.
In case of incomprehension, increase the comprehensibility of input by using various meaning negotiating strategies (e.g. use paraphrasing)	Do not just repeat what you said in case you identify incomprehension. Do not over-accommodate, i.e. simplify your language too much to help the student.

SHORT QUIZ

1. What kind of questions can the Interlocutor ask in Part 1 of the exam?
2. How can the Interlocutor prevent the candidate from giving a “pre-prepared speech”?
3. Can the Interlocutor make up his/her own questions to help the candidate talk in Part 2?
4. What should the Interlocutor do if the student makes a mistake during the oral test?
5. What question types should the Interlocutor avoid using?
6. When can the Assessor enter the oral exam?
7. How should the Interlocutor assist in Part 4 if the interaction fails to develop or breaks down completely?
8. What should the Interlocutor’s behaviour be like? (Tick.)
attentive ironic chatty encouraging patronising
9. Should the students be penalised for checking the instructions before commencing the task?
10. When do the Assessor and the Interlocutor discuss the student’s mark?