



**Vocational & Professional Series
Part 2**

**Business & Management
2 - 5**

**Business 2 - 3
Management 3
Professional Communication
4 - 5**

**Incorporating former level 4 in vocational grades,
Business & Management and former level 5 in
Management**

Business & Management

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The following gives a brief outline of ESB's provision and assessment processes.

Aims

The English Speaking Board was founded in 1953 to promote and assess effective, confident and constructive oral communication skills for all levels and all ages. The emphasis is very much on spoken English as a practical and enjoyable life skill, with the focus at assessment on the candidate both as a speaker and as an active listener sharing knowledge and ideas with others.

Provision

ESB provides qualifications in Spoken English through four main series of assessment programmes:

Junior and Senior	-	Entry Level to Level 3
Vocational and Professional	-	Levels 1-5
Certificate of Achievement	-	Pre-Entry and Entry Levels 1-3
English as an Acquired Language (EAL)	-	Pre-Entry Level to Level 5.

Format and Progression

Most ESB programmes focus on four assessment tasks exploring a range of skills. In each series there is a common core of presentation skills and interactive questions and discussion. The presentation focuses on knowledge and skills in differing contexts based on the candidate's own experience, vocational context or interests, appropriately illustrated with visual aids. Other tasks, depending on programme and level, may include literary interpretation through reading and memorisation, telephone or interviewing skills, current affairs, debate, etc.

Each series of programmes is designed to encourage progression. The skills required at each stage are distinguished by increasing demands of thought, shaping, language and technique appropriate to context and level. Key Skill Communication and the wider key skills are signposted for all relevant programmes.

Guided learning hours are flexible to allow for entries throughout the year, individual rate of progress and context for delivery: as the focus for a short course or to complement/assist delivery of e.g. GNVQ, NVQ or English in the National Curriculum, usually over 1-3 terms according to level and application.

Assessment and Awarding

All assessment is external, carried out on-site at user centres by a trained team of visiting examiners throughout the UK and overseas. All ESB assessors are independent of the centres where they assess. (ESB usually uses the term 'examiner' for its Junior/Senior Grades and its EAL series, and 'assessor' for the Vocational & Professional series and Certificate of Achievement programmes.)

Assessment takes place within a participating peer group, as candidate interaction is an integral part of the assessment. Each candidate must be present for the session of at least five other candidates to give opportunities for each to demonstrate listening and responding skills as well as competence as a speaker. The assessment process itself is independent and the tutor is not involved in the process or outcome but is invited to observe part or all of the assessment as part of the formative nature of the programme.

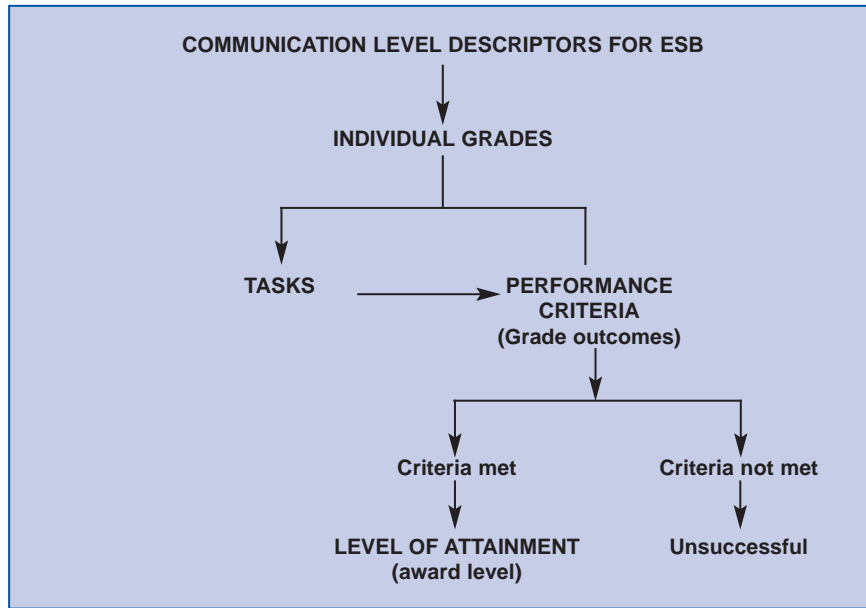
Oral competence is complemented by visual aids, notes and written support materials where appropriate, prepared in advance of assessment to assist in fulfilling performance tasks and assessment criteria.

Each candidate receives a specific written report with results and guidance within five days (UK). All successful candidates receive a certificate within approximately six weeks giving syllabus, level and grade of pass.

Booking and Administration

Booking is straightforward. Assessments are booked at least three months in advance to ensure candidates have sufficient time for preparation and so that an appropriate assessor can be allocated. Centres are asked to give a choice of two preferred dates for the assessment session. The administrative team at ESB's head office provide on-going support and can also refer organisers to a specialist helpline for syllabus queries if required. Full administrative guidance, including information on the centre approval process, is available from ESB head office. The Handbook for Organisers includes procedures for the assessment day and guidelines on candidate numbers.

ESB ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME FLOW CHART



ESB ASSESSMENTS – MARK SCHEME

Each Level of each assessment programme has its own criteria for each section to reflect specific emphases and the progressive mastery of knowledge, skills and understanding as specified in the assessment tasks.

Levels of Attainment

A specific level of pass gives articulation between Qualification Levels and helps to measure readiness for the next Level. ‘Pass’ indicates the minimum level at which criteria have been met for the Level. Higher levels of attainment are based on evidence at each Level of the increasing degree of independence, skill and control in: selecting, shaping and presenting information, strategy and ideas; handling equipment and visual aids; monitoring and evaluating response; fluency, confidence, technique, language skills and sensitivity in sharing communication and supporting others.

At assessment each section is awarded a level of attainment. The overall award level is the aggregate for the four sections. The talk/presentation in Section 1 carries double weighting unless stated otherwise (i.e. 40% of the total award). Each of the other tasks carries equal weighting, i.e. each is equivalent to one fifth of the total award. The individual candidate report gives the individual level of attainment for each task and the aggregate (overall) level. The aggregate level is the one recorded on the certificate.

Percentage marks are not given on reports or certificates, but equate as follows:

Pass = 50+ Merit = 75+ Distinction = 90+

Exceptionally, a candidate may be marked Unsuccessful on one section and still achieve an overall pass level through the standard of the other sections. No pass is possible where a candidate fails more than one section.

ESB BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT QUALIFICATIONS

Business & Management programmes represent Part 2 of ESB’s Vocational & Professional series of graded assessments for progression in oral communication.

ESB Business & Management Qualifications are appropriate for:

- ◆ Candidates in business and management positions of authority (from level 3)
- ◆ Candidates following business or management courses at levels 2-5 with generic or specific requirements for recognising communicative competence
- ◆ Candidates seeking progression from ESB’s generic or sector specific vocational qualifications at level 3 to Professional Communication grades 4-5
- ◆ Candidates following a free-standing Communications course or module
- ◆ Candidates requiring evidence of professional communication skills as part of their continuing professional development (CPD).

SYLLABUS	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
BUSINESS	B	B		
MANAGEMENT		M		
*PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION			P	P
*Consolidated grades for vocational and professional candidates at levels 4-5				

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES FOR ESB BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT QUALIFICATIONS

The Business & Management programmes are designed to provide a distinctive bridge between oral skills and a broad business and management context. Assessment tasks in presentation skills and professional interaction all relate to professional competence while focusing achievement through developing perceptive listening and speaking skills and personal confidence within the context of the participating, responding group.

Specifically, the ESB Business & Management programmes are designed to:

- ◆ Focus on purposeful transferable communication skills in relation to a target audience in a vocational, business or management context
- ◆ Encourage the development of professional communication with particular awareness of the social, cultural and personal aspects of communicative skills within an organisation
- ◆ Develop a professional approach to research and the organisation of material
- ◆ Develop effective design and use of audio-visual aids as an integral part of a presentation
- ◆ Encourage reflection on one’s own achievements and constraints in the vocational or business environment
- ◆ Give scope for candidates to consider, monitor and evaluate choices and strategies
- ◆ Explore and demonstrate problem solving strategies whether dealing with people or systems
- ◆ Develop assured communication techniques to gain and hold attention
- ◆ Foster an appreciation of language and develop ability to express self with vitality, relevance, cogency and clarity
- ◆ Encourage the sharing of facts, ideas and opinions with a receptive audience
- ◆ Provide a structured forum for developing discursive interactive skills
- ◆ Recognise each candidate as an individual with a unique capability
- ◆ Promote the interaction of candidate, tutor and trained external assessor to provide maximum opportunities for the candidate and an occasion where assessment is a formative and positive part of the whole learning experience.

Eligibility

There is no specific ESB requirement for prior learning at any level, but it is expected that candidates entering for a given level will have the communication skills, knowledge and understanding to benefit from that level. This will usually mean a prior level of competence at the start of the ESB programme no lower than a level below the expected outcome.

Where ESB is used in conjunction with a parent programme such as GNVQ or NVQ, the entry requirements for that course will determine the entry level for the comparable ESB level. Candidates are not entitled to enter more than one level on any one occasion of assessment.

Progression

Business 2-3 and Management 3 provide a basis for progression to the consolidated Professional grades. Professional Communication 4-5 support progression.

- ◆ from ESB Vocational programmes at level 3 (see programmes itemised in Additional Guidance)
- ◆ from level 4 to level 5 within the programme
- ◆ to other discrete ESB programmes at levels 4-5 by lateral or linear progression
- ◆ within related GNVQ or NVQ courses
- ◆ within higher education courses
- ◆ within CPD related programmes.

EAL candidates have the opportunity to progress to mainstream programmes at the appropriate level.

FORMAT FOR SPECIFICATIONS

1. **Communication Level Descriptors for ESB** give the broad context for the communicative skills required at each level to demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding. Levels 1-5 are provided.
2. **Content Summary.** A content summary grid gives an overview of content for each Level so that users can see the comparative and progressive requirements at a glance.
3. **TASKS and Criteria.** The assessment tasks for each Level are addressed to the candidate. The tasks are followed by the assessment criteria for that level for easy reference. The tasks 'flesh out' the content summary and are in turn further defined by the criteria:

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA (intended outcomes) say what the candidate must do to fulfil the criteria as applied to a particular task within a level. The performance criteria are addressed to the candidate.

See ESB's Vocational & Professional programmes Part 1 for Vocational programmes 1-3 for:

Vocational Grades (generic core syllabus) with sector specific contexts for:

- Early Childhood Studies
- Hair & Beauty
- Hotel & Catering
- Leisure, Travel & Tourism (with option for Overseas Resort Representatives at level 3)
- Social Care

Available as discrete assessment programmes from ESB in vocational and professional contexts:

- ◆ Pre-Vocational Certificate - (Level 1)
- ◆ Oral Resources for Adult Learners - (Levels 1-4)
- ◆ Readers & Leaders in Places of Worship - (Levels 2-4)
- ◆ Professional Presentation Skills - (Level 4)
- ◆ Teachers' Certificate - Level 4 for Teachers in Training and Level 5 for Qualified Teachers
- ◆ Diploma ESB - Level 5 (in Education or Management)

COMMUNICATION LEVEL DESCRIPTORS FOR ESB

Indicate range of knowledge and understanding for ESB communicative competence.

Level 1

Competence in straightforward, mostly familiar contexts:

Receiving spoken language

- listening to understand information, sequential narrative, structure
- understanding to follow straightforward explanations and instructions

Communicating orally

- conveying information one-to-one and to group – information, narrative, ideas, opinions
- using appropriate visual aids to support presentation
- speaking with clarity and enthusiasm
- seeking information or answers from others
- adapting speech and content for audience and occasion
- working to given schedule

Discussing

- interacting in one-to-one and group situations
- contributing appropriately
- clarifying questions and information as appropriate
- helping to take discussion forward
- supporting other speakers by verbal and non-verbal response

Reading with a purpose

- reading straightforward texts in different contexts/media on variety of topics
- identifying appropriate sources for information or personal, descriptive content – books/ journalism/internet
- selecting relevant information for purpose
- reading aloud for meaning, clearly and audibly

Writing (support material)

- communicating primarily straightforward information, ideas, opinions
- choosing a style of writing suitable for purpose
- choosing a format of writing suitable for purpose
- using appropriate illustrative materials
- using basic standard English as appropriate to context.

Level 2

Competence mostly in straightforward contexts, with some more complex:

Receiving spoken language

- listening for understanding of content
- identifying relevant information, sequential narrative, structure
- following straightforward and some more complex explanations and instructions
- adapting to speaker and context
- recognising meaning affected by tone and inflection

Communicating orally

- conveying information clearly, one-to-one and to group – facts, narrative, ideas, opinions – and signposting development of theme
- seeking information or answers from others
- adapting language, content and format for audience and purpose - with/without visual aids
- communicating with vitality of tone, projection and appropriate pace & working to schedule

Discussing

- interacting positively in one-to-one and group situations
- contributing relevantly without bias
- clarifying questions and information where appropriate
- helping to take discussion forward by open-ended questioning and innovative comment
- supporting other speakers by verbal and non-verbal response

Reading with a purpose

- reading texts in different contexts / media on variety of topics
- identifying appropriate sources for information and insights – books, journalism, internet, etc.
- identifying main issues / themes and selecting / developing information applicable for purpose
- reading aloud to share with listeners the development of theme, mood and style

Writing (support material)

- communicating straightforward and some more complex information, ideas, opinions
- choosing format and language appropriate to purpose
- selecting or designing graphs, charts, illustrations appropriate for purpose
- using standard English as appropriate to context, with accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Level 3

Competence in straightforward and complex contexts:

Receiving spoken language

- perceptive listening for understanding of content and direction
- identifying relevant information, sequential narrative, structure and inference
- following straightforward and complex issues and arguments
- identifying communication of bias or persuasion in speaker

Communicating orally

- conveying concepts and opinions, including complex, lucidly in one-to-one and group contexts
- signposting development of information and thought by structure and verbal signals
- selecting/designing and integrating images/equipment as appropriate to support meaning and emphasis
- adapting language, content, format and register for audience and purpose
- supporting oral communication with vitality of tone, projection and appropriate pace
- using well structured language with range of appropriate, precise vocabulary

Discussing

- interacting positively and constructively in one-to-one and group situations
- seeking information or clarification from others with understanding of culture, feelings, language
- showing ability to meet challenges from others and evaluate response
- helping to take discussion forward by open-ended questioning and innovative comment
- supporting other speakers by verbal and non-verbal response

Reading with a purpose

- identifying appropriate sources for purpose – books, journalism, internet, etc.
- reading or skimming texts in different contexts / media on variety of topics
- identifying main issues or themes and selecting / developing information applicable for purpose
- appreciating qualities of personal, descriptive writing as well as factual content
- distinguishing fact from opinion and identifying bias
- reading aloud to share with listeners development of meaning, mood and style

Writing (support material)

- synthesising and communicating straightforward and complex information, ideas, opinions
- choosing format and language appropriate to purpose
- selecting or designing graphs, charts, illustrations appropriate for purpose
- using standard English as appropriate to context, with accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation to support precise meaning.

Level 4

Competence in mostly complex contexts requiring responsibility and discrimination:

Receiving spoken language

- perceptive listening for understanding of content, direction and inference
- identifying relevant information, concepts and strategies
- following range of complex issues and arguments
- identifying communication of bias or persuasion in speaker

Communicating orally

- analysing and conveying concepts and opinions, including complex, lucidly in one-to-one and group contexts
- guiding development of information and thought and its understanding by structure and verbal signals,
- selecting/designing and integrating images/equipment as appropriate to support meaning and emphasis
- adapting language, content, format and register for audience and purpose
- supporting oral communication with cogency, vitality of tone, projection and appropriate pace
- using well structured language with range of appropriate, precise vocabulary

Discussing

- anticipating and interacting positively and constructively in one-to-one and group situations
- seeking information or clarification from others with understanding of culture, feelings, language
- showing ability to discriminate, meet challenges from others and evaluate response
- helping to take discussion forward by open-ended questioning and innovative comment
- leading and supporting other speakers by verbal and non-verbal response

Reading with a purpose

- identifying appropriate sources for purpose – books, journalism, internet, etc.
- reading or skimming materials in different contexts / media on variety of topics
- identifying main issues or themes and analysing and synthesising for purpose, including appreciation of descriptive, imaginative writing
- distinguishing fact from opinion and identifying bias
- reading aloud to share with listeners the development of meaning, mood and style

Writing (support material)

- synthesising and communicating straightforward and complex information, ideas, opinions
- choosing format and language appropriate to purpose
- designing, selecting and integrating graphs, charts, illustrations appropriate for purpose
- using standard English as appropriate to context, with accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation to support precise meaning and wide-ranging vocabulary.

Level 5

Competence in mostly complex contexts requiring strategy, responsibility, discrimination and evaluation:

Receiving spoken language

- listening perceptively for meaning, structure, intent
- anticipating and analysing relevant information, concepts and strategies
- interpreting range of complex issues and arguments, redefining where appropriate
- identifying bias or persuasive techniques in a speaker

Communicating orally

- analysing, synthesising and presenting often complex strategy and concepts lucidly in one-to-one and group contexts, with assured professional presence
- guiding development of information and intent by structure and verbal signals
- communicating with fluent, articulate and well structured language with a range of appropriate vocabulary
- supporting oral communication with cogency, vitality of speech, projection and eye contact, with awareness of needs of particular audience
- selecting/designing and integrating images/equipment/demonstration as appropriate to support meaning and emphasis

Discussing

- anticipating and interacting positively and constructively in one-to-one and group situations
- seeking information or clarification from others with understanding of culture, feelings, language
- showing ability to crystallise the views of self and others by reviewing, monitoring and evaluating stages of discussion and debate with discrimination and sensitivity
- initiating new directions when appropriate, showing independent thought
- leading and supporting other speakers by verbal and non-verbal response

Reading with a purpose

- exploring range of resources for purpose – both electronic and written
- identifying main issues or themes and skimming/analysing and synthesising for chosen purpose
- discriminating in appreciating qualities of written communication across different contexts and style, including appreciation of descriptive, imaginative writing
- distinguishing fact from opinion and identifying bias
- recognising power of images and graphical materials
- reading aloud to share with listeners the development of meaning, mood and style

Writing (support material)

- planning and researching straightforward and complex information, ideas, opinions
- choosing format and style appropriate to audience and purpose
- using accurate standard English as appropriate to context, with clarity, flexibility and imagination
- designing, selecting and integrating images and graphical materials appropriate for purpose.

**ORAL SKILLS IN BUSINESS
CONTENT SUMMARY
LEVELS 2-3**

Oral Skills in Business levels 2-3 are intended for those who are involved in the wide field of 'business' at various levels from trainee to professional administrators in e.g. service industries, retail, local government and statutory and voluntary organisations. The ESB assessment focuses on effective professional oral skills, with a human face, in the business environment. At each level, the emphasis is on: What is the purpose of the communication? Who is my audience?

The assessments are designed to give opportunities for students to communicate professional, community and personal skills (using visual aids where appropriate) in, a lucid, lively manner and to interpret the written word with clarity and understanding.

Progressively higher standards will be expected both in content and in communication skills at the higher levels.

Level 2 is recommended for those in work or training at GCSE, Level 2 NVQ/GNVQ or equivalent.

Level 3 is recommended for those with some experience in business, usually at supervisory level, or training at this level – NVQ/GNVQ level 3 or equivalent.

Note: Professional Communication Level 4 is recommended for those in a position of some responsibility and authority – HND/undergraduate/NVQ 4 level or equivalent.

Section 1 may be presented as an individual talk or with a partner. If the talk is shared, each speaker should have equal input in preparation and delivery of the topic. In paired talks, the individual time remains the same for each speaker.

All tasks take place in a participating group context. All tasks are mandatory.

Oral Skills in Business	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4
Level 2 15 minutes	Oral Presentation 4-5 minutes Talk on skill or equipment employed during training with demonstration material and written evidence of preparation.	Personal Interaction 3-4 minutes Choice + written summary a) own qualities for job b) own customer client care c) career future.	Telephone – receiver 2-3 minutes As receiver, answering an enquiry, noting and confirming information.	Group Interaction Active listening & response; constructive discussion.
Level 3 18- 20 minutes	Oral Presentation 5-6 minutes Explain skill/process accomplished and problems, encountered, using integrated visual aids. Written report of findings.	Interview skills approx. 4 minutes Outlining job requirements and justifying own suitability. Putting queries to ask an employer; answering questions. CV required.	Professional Briefing 4-5 minutes Introducing junior employees to firm and job and answering queries. Plus reading company literature with written evaluation.	Group Interaction Constructive interaction including justifying views.

ORAL SKILLS IN BUSINESS 2

TOTAL INDIVIDUAL TIME: 15 MINUTES

Recommended for those in work or training at level 2 NVQ/GNVQ, GCSE, or equivalent

Section 1: Talk – Oral Presentation (4-5 minutes per candidate)

Talk to the listening group about a skill or equipment you have utilised during your training or work experience (e.g. computer application, stock control, etc.). Integrate into your talk any supportive material used for demonstration. Brief headline points on card may be used for reference only; the aim is lively, direct delivery to the group, and factual points should be enlivened with individual descriptive detail. Provide brief written evidence of your preparation for the assessor.

Section 2: Personal Interaction (3-4 minutes)

Each of these choices gives you the freedom to put yourself across and show constructive thinking. Choose one option to outline to the group. Option b) is more suited to those with practical work experience.

- a) What qualities do you possess – or would like to possess – to further your progress in your job?
- b) Explain your personal success and/or difficulties in customer/client care. Give examples.
- c) How do you see yourself in five years' time? What steps are you taking towards these goals?

Whichever option you choose, provide a brief written summary of your conclusions (about 200 words).

Section 3: Telephone Skills – Receiver (2-3 minutes)

The assessor will act as caller, putting an enquiry which you will answer in the appropriate role. The situation will be outlined for you at the start and you will be expected to ensure you have provided and noted the information needed by the end of the call. The situation will involve.

- a) answering a straightforward query – work or community based
- b) noting down a message
- c) repeating the message details accurately afterwards.

Section 4: Group interaction

Throughout the session you will be expected to deal with questions on your own sections, to listen actively to others, to ask open-ended questions and interact constructively to help take discussion forward.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA FOR ORAL SKILLS IN BUSINESS 2

Section 1

In structuring and delivering presentation using visual aids you must show that you can:

- ◆ identify and select information related to chosen specialist area
- ◆ draw up publicity materials to show evidence of preparation and research
- ◆ introduce theme and signpost development for listeners
- ◆ engage audience by tone, pace, projection and clarity
- ◆ identify and use language and register appropriate to audience and purpose
- ◆ incorporate visual aids appropriately into the presentation to illustrate but not dominate
- ◆ observe given time limits.

Section 2

In explaining personal interaction, you must show that you can:

- ◆ introduce context to audience
- ◆ deliver information and views to reflect understanding and purpose
- ◆ project voice clearly and audibly, with variety
- ◆ present written conclusions supporting oral input.

Section 3

In receiving a telephone call to clarify and exchange information you must show that you can:

- ◆ announce self/firm clearly and courteously
- ◆ demonstrate active listening by confirming requirements of caller
- ◆ work with caller to establish action required
- ◆ clarify and confirm information given and received
- ◆ check for any follow-up and action required
- ◆ observe courteous and businesslike approach throughout.

Section 4

In listening and responding you must show that you can:

- ◆ listen carefully to gain understanding of questions and points for discussion
- ◆ respond clearly and appropriately
- ◆ make relevant enquiries of others, including using open-ended questions
- ◆ demonstrate interactive awareness of and support for others in the group.

ORAL SKILLS IN BUSINESS 3

TOTAL INDIVIDUAL TIME: 18-20 MINUTES

Section 1: Oral Presentation

(5-6 minutes per candidate + questions)

Explain a skill or process connected with your work (or career development training) which you have successfully accomplished, and the problems you have encountered in doing so. Be prepared to amplify or demonstrate in response to questions from the listening group. The presentation should be illustrated with appropriate visual aids, and a report of your findings should be available for the assessor.

Section 2: Interview Skills

(3- 4 minutes)

You are applying for a job which you will outline for the assessor. Follow this up with a reasoned justification for your suitability and explain to the assessor the questions you would need to ask a prospective employer. The assessor will ask questions as from an employer.

Provide a C.V.

Section 3: Professional Briefing

(4-5 minutes)

You are meeting for the first time a group of new junior employees. Introduce them to the special features of your organisation and explain the job(s) you wish them to undertake. Use the assessment group – or part of it – for this exercise, and answer their questions.

As part of your briefing, bring an example of professional or company literature or a business book which is relevant to the induction, and read the group a short selected passage (150-200 words), so that the meaning is clear and delivered with eye contact and vitality.

Have available for the assessor a short written personal evaluation of the material you have read.

Section 4: Group Interaction

Throughout the session, the assessor and the group will have an opportunity to ask questions. You may be asked to amplify, defend opinions, put your own viewpoint, etc. and to take your turn at joining in constructively in open-ended questioning and discussion during the sessions of others in the group.

The quality of listening and anticipation is also being assessed.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA FOR ORAL SKILLS IN BUSINESS 3

Section 1

In structuring and delivering presentation using visual aids you must show that you can:

- ◆ identify and select relevant information related to chosen career-related area
- ◆ introduce choice with rationale, and signpost development of theme to audience
- ◆ explore constraints and problem-solving strategies
- ◆ demonstrate professional authority and interaction with audience by vocal skills and body language
- ◆ use well structured language and varied vocabulary appropriate to audience and purpose
- ◆ design and incorporate visual aids appropriately into the presentation to illuminate but not dominate
- ◆ provide appropriate written material to support findings.

Section 2

In outlining own suitability for a job, you must show that you can:

- ◆ research and identify job suitable for skills and personality
- ◆ summarise briefly and with confidence the requirements and scope of the job to mixed audience
- ◆ explain how own abilities and qualities match job requirements and how any shortfall could be met
- ◆ ask questions to develop further awareness of scope and constraints of job
- ◆ answer questions from assessor as interviewer, including references to team-working and problem-solving skills
- ◆ provide professional CV appropriate to qualifications, experience and skills.

Section 3

In carrying out a professional briefing, you must show that you can:

- ◆ introduce self and role in context of organisation
- ◆ define briefly key features of organisation to give idea of size, aims, product/service and culture
- ◆ review requirements of job and any further induction procedures
- ◆ answer appropriately questions from employees, with awareness of their needs and concerns
- ◆ as part of briefing, deliver extract from relevant literature with clarity, vitality and eye contact
- ◆ provide brief but apt written review of illustrative material chosen.

Section 4

In listening and responding in a participating group, you must show that you can:

- ◆ listen actively and perceptively to understand questions
- ◆ ask pertinent, open-ended questions to further thinking and debate
- ◆ show constructive ability to amplify ideas, persuade, modify and evaluate as appropriate
- ◆ demonstrate interactive awareness of and support for others in the group.

Oral Skills in Management 3 is intended as the first stage for those working in Management from junior to high levels of responsibility. Professional Communication grades at levels 4 and 5 make a natural progression whereby candidates can increasingly show themselves adept at communicating alike with peers, subordinates, clients and senior professionals.

Assessment focuses on effective oral communication in a professional context, with candidates showing the ability to manage themselves as well as others. All assessments are carried out in the presence of a listening, responding group. Part of each candidate's assessment involves participating as a member of this group.

Brief headline notes may be used in any section, for reference only. Audio-visual aids or other demonstration material may be used in the assessment. Particular attention is drawn to the timing laid down in each section, which includes the setting up of any material.

All tasks take place in a participating group context. All tasks are mandatory.

Section 1 may be presented as an individual talk or with a partner. If the talk is shared, each speaker should have equal input in preparation and delivery of the topic. In paired talks, the individual time remains the same for each speaker.

ORAL SKILLS IN MANAGEMENT 3**TOTAL INDIVIDUAL TIME: 25-30 MINUTES****Section 1: Oral Presentation****(8-10 minutes + questions)**

Describe a specific principle, process or method related to your own work or training. Summarise the current advantages and disadvantages, and suggest any changes you would introduce to improve efficiency. Use appropriate visual aids to support your presentation. You should define your listening group.

Section 2: Current Affairs**(6 minutes)**

- a) Give a brief outline of an article (approximately quarter of an A4 page) from a quality newspaper, journal or magazine which promotes a particular point of view. The assessor will select a short extract for you to read aloud to the group, giving the 'flavour' of the piece.
- b) Bring a letter you have written to the editor of the paper from which the article was taken, to endorse or put an opposing point of view, with reasons. Read this aloud to the group.

Be prepared to answer queries and deal with comments on either part of this Section.

Section 3: Factual Reporting**(5 minutes)**

Present to your management committee a formal oral report giving details of an investigation or accident. The group will act as members of the committee and respond accordingly. Brief notes or an OHP acetate may be used for reference.

Section 4: Group Interaction

Throughout the session, the assessor and the group will have an opportunity to ask questions. You may be asked to amplify, defend opinions, put your own viewpoint, etc. and to take your turn at joining in constructively in open-ended questioning and discussion during the sessions of others in the group. The quality of listening and anticipation is also being assessed.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA FOR MANAGEMENT LEVEL 3

Section 1

In describing a process and supporting and illustrating a rationale for improvement, you must show that you can:

- ◆ describe current principle or process in context and signpost development of proposition
- ◆ summarise advantages and disadvantages of current operation
- ◆ present and support rationale for improved efficiency
- ◆ demonstrate professional authority and interaction with defined audience by vocal skills and body language
- ◆ use well structured language and varied vocabulary appropriate to audience and purpose
- ◆ design and incorporate visual aids appropriately into the presentation to illuminate but not dominate.

Section 2

In reading and discussing a topic of current affairs, you must show that you can:

- ◆ research and identify topic from quality journalism, suitable for purpose and audience
- ◆ outline the context and alert audience to particular viewpoint of writer
- ◆ consider methods used by writer to promote this view
- ◆ read aloud given extract to further understanding of meaning and mood
- ◆ read own letter giving support or opposition through reasoned approach
- ◆ answer questions from listeners on topic article and response.

Section 3

In presenting a factual oral report, you must show that you can:

- ◆ answer listeners' need for clear context in which investigation or accident occurred
- ◆ report as to committee in logical detail the sequence of events
- ◆ take account of particular constraints affecting the sequence and outcome
- ◆ answer appropriately any queries for clarification or additional information
- ◆ review with group members the issues raised
- ◆ work with members to agree recommendations for follow-up action.

Section 4

In listening and responding in a participating group, you must show that you can:

- ◆ listen actively and perceptively to understand questions
- ◆ ask pertinent, open-ended questions to further thinking and debate
- ◆ show constructive ability to amplify ideas, persuade, modify and evaluate as appropriate
- ◆ demonstrate interactive awareness of and support for others in the group.

**PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION
CONTENT SUMMARY
LEVELS 4-5**

Professional Communication grades are intended for those who are involved in a wide professional field at the higher levels: e.g. service industries, local government and statutory and voluntary organisations, business and management.

Assessment focuses on effective oral communication in this professional context. Candidates should show themselves to be adept at communicating alike with peers, subordinates, clients and senior professionals.

At each level candidates should ask themselves: What is the purpose of the communication? Who is my audience?

All assessments are carried out in the presence of a listening, responding group. Part of each candidate’s assessment involves participating as a member of this group. At levels 4 and 5, candidates are expected to demonstrate authority in their chosen area, with the ability to make professional presentations and respond courteously and constructively to their audience. They should demonstrate effective skills in strategic planning and in developing a structured logical argument but also the ability to discriminate, and to modify and evaluate their thinking in response to others’ views. This could also involve meeting challenges and dealing with contingencies.

Brief headline notes may be used in any section, for reference only. Audio-visual aids or other demonstration material may be used in the assessment. Particular attention is drawn to the timing laid down in each section, which includes the setting up of any material.

Level 4 is recommended for those in a position of some responsibility and authority or training for such – middle management (HND/NVQ 4 level or equivalent).

Level 5 is recommended for those in senior positions (level 5 or equivalent)

Section 1 may be presented as an individual talk or with a partner. If the talk is shared, each speaker should have equal input in preparation and delivery of the topic. In paired talks, the individual time remains the same for each speaker.

All tasks take place in a participating group context. All tasks are mandatory.

Professional Grades	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4
Level 4 35-40 minutes	Action Plan 10-12 minutes Giving detailed action plan for improving efficiency in own organisation, with integrated visual material. Written report with findings and conclusions.	Reading & Review 6 minutes a) Interpretative reading of professional interest, from (auto)biography or business analysis, with introduction. (2 mins) b) Reading own review of source material and using feedback to evaluate the review (4 mins).	Interview panel 7-8 minutes Outlining preferred job with its demands, and indicating suitability Answering queries as from interview panel.	Group Interaction Tuning in to varied audience; adjusting response; justifying and evaluating.
Level 5 45-50 minutes	Managing Change approx 15 minutes Introducing major organisational change as to employees or clients, with context and schedule, and dealing with feedback.	Explaining Printed Word approx 6 minutes Reading prepared excerpt from manifesto/report/ White Paper with wide implications (national/ European), to defined audience. Justifying own viewpoint, plus written critique.	Discussion Leading 5 + 7 minutes Introducing issue to small group, leading through opinion-finding discussion, summing up and expressing majority viewpoint in a formal proposal.	Group Interaction Full involvement as speaker and listener, showing discrimination and leadership.

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION 4**TOTAL INDIVIDUAL TIME: 30 MINUTES**

At this level candidates should be able to show that they can communicate equally well with subordinates, peer colleagues or professional representatives in senior positions. The audience may be mixed, comprising some candidates at lower levels; but it must include at least two or three members at the entrant's own level or above. It should include some members who are unfamiliar to the candidate, or in infrequent contact. (It is not necessary for all of the audience to be ESB entrants.)

Section 1: Action Plan (10-12 minutes + questions)

Give a detailed analysis for an action plan which would increase efficiency in your organisation. Define your listening group (e.g. production personnel/managers/HR representatives) and be ready to answer their questions. Supportive visual material – e.g. plans, graphs, etc. – should be appropriately displayed and directly integrated into the oral exposition.

Your presentation should be expressed effectively for content and audience, taking account of factors such as the need to convey e.g. technical or sensitive issues.

A report with your conclusions and recommendations should be provided for the assessor.

Section 2: Reading and Review (6 minutes)**a) Reading aloud: professional interest (approx 2 minutes)**

Bring a biography, autobiography or analysis which has some bearing on your professional field. Introduce it briefly, then read aloud to the group a passage you have prepared.

b) Reading aloud: professional response (approx 4 minutes)

Bring a considered review which you have written of the book/source material referred to in a) and read it aloud to the group. Deal with questions and use these to help you evaluate the clarity, balance and effectiveness of your review.

Section 3: Interview Panel (7-8 minutes)

Outline to the group a job for which you would like to apply. This may be within your current organisation or elsewhere. Indicate the main demands of the post as you see them and make clear why you feel you are a suitable applicant. Answer questions from the assessor and group as from an interviewing panel.

Section 4: Group Interaction

Constructive listening and responding is assessed not only during your own session but throughout the overall session. The other members of the group may, or may not be, advanced candidates; therefore you should 'tune in' appropriately to all individuals in the audience, adjusting your answers and questions to the various levels of experience. At this level, you should be able to show leadership in debate and justify and evaluate your decisions, including modifying opinions if necessary.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA FOR PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION 4

Section 1

In structuring and delivering an action plan with illustrative materials, you must show that you can:

- ◆ research subject in analytical depth, selecting and organising relevant information
- ◆ complement findings by own professional understanding
- ◆ signpost and develop rationale for ready understanding of listeners
- ◆ deliver material with cogent authority and effective projection
- ◆ adjust language and register for defined audience
- ◆ integrate variety of illustrative material to illuminate treatment of subject
- ◆ provide relevant formal written report to support recommendations.

Section 2

In communicating written material and responding to it, you must show that you can:

- ◆ show discrimination in selecting appropriate text
- ◆ introduce it briefly to alert audience to main qualities and to set chosen extract in context
- ◆ read extract aloud to listeners to shape meaning and mood by phrasing and vocal skills
- ◆ show ability to monitor response and, if appropriate, to modify and re-evaluate own findings
- ◆ read own prepared review giving fuller appraisal of the source material
- ◆ use feedback for further evaluation of clarity, balance and scope of own interpretation.

Section 3

In presenting yourself as a suitable candidate for a job, you must show that you can:

- ◆ summarise the demands of a chosen job in context
- ◆ make a well reasoned case for own suitability
- ◆ anticipate any negative factors to show how these would be met
- ◆ handle queries and possibly contra-indications from listening panel
- ◆ enhance verbal content by assurance, stance, tone and body language.

Section 4

In listening and responding in a participating group, you must show that you can:

- ◆ listen perceptively to range of queries and views
- ◆ recognise situations where there may be no clear answer
- ◆ provide coherent, well expressed response in variety of contexts
- ◆ demonstrate leadership in introducing new concepts and carrying debate forward constructively
- ◆ be prepared to modify, amplify, monitor and evaluate own contributions as appropriate
- ◆ work as part of a team, recognising others' input throughout.

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION 5

TOTAL INDIVIDUAL TIME: 45-50 MINUTES

For middle to senior managers: NVQ 5 or equivalent.

The audience may be mixed, comprising some candidates at lower levels; but it must include at least two or three members (whether ESB candidates or other members of the audience) at the entrant's own level. The group of listeners should include some members who are unfamiliar to the candidate, or in infrequent contact.

Section 1: Managing Change (approximately 15 minutes)

Introduce a proposal for a major change in your organisation, treating the group as though they are employees or clients who will be affected by it: e.g. an appraisal scheme, computerisation (part/whole) re-location, customer service scheme, etc.

You will need to summarise the current situation to give clearly the context in which the changes are to take place, and to persuade your listeners of the advantages of your proposal. Give a schedule for its implementation. The group in turn will respond with queries and requests for amplification. You may also have to deal with challenges and possibly dissent, so the situation requires sensitivity as well as authority.

Section 2: Explaining the Printed Word (approx 6 minutes)

Prepare an extract for reading aloud, taken from a report, mandate, manifesto or industrial White Paper dealing with some topical issue related to the modern business world. The subject chosen could well have wider implications and repercussions than your immediate context, as it may be of national, European or international concern. The interpretative reading should take about two minutes. Use good eye contact and variety of pause, stress, pitch and tone to alert the audience to meaning and development of thought.

Introduce your material in context. Define the audience you are addressing and be ready to justify your cause in answering questions.

Supply a short critique you have written to support the reasons for your choice.

Section 3: Discussion Leading (5+7 minutes)

The assessor will select a small group of people to whom you will introduce a topic of general interest of your choice before leading them through an opinion-finding discussion and summarising the findings. You should express the majority viewpoint in a formal proposal such as might go forward to a committee.

Section 4: Group Interaction

Throughout your own session and that of others, you are expected to be involved as speaker and listener. You should be able to justify decisions, but be prepared to modify opinions if appropriate, reflecting your ability to discriminate and to evaluate both your own response and that of others.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA FOR PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION 5

Section 1

In delivering a proposal for major change within your organisation, you must show that you can:

- ◆ give principles and rationale for introducing change
- ◆ provide sequenced strategy and schedule for its execution
- ◆ analyse benefits without discounting any likely problems
- ◆ present scheme with authority, clarity and skilled use of language
- ◆ show sensitivity to the needs and concerns of those affected by the programme
- ◆ deal appropriately with queries, including those related to contingency planning
- ◆ supply and integrate appropriate support materials.

Section 2

In communicating written material and responding to it, you must show that you can:

- ◆ show discrimination in selecting appropriate text
- ◆ introduce it briefly to alert audience to main qualities and to set chosen extract in context
- ◆ read extract aloud to listeners to shape meaning and mood by phrasing and vocal skills
- ◆ show ability to monitor response and, if appropriate, to modify and re-evaluate own findings
- ◆ read prepared review giving fuller appraisal of the source material
- ◆ use feedback for further evaluation of clarity, balance and scope of own interpretation.

Section 3

In discussion leading, you must show that you can:

- ◆ introduce appropriate topic to stimulate understanding, interest and to promote discussion
- ◆ encourage high level response from all in the group
- ◆ summarise response from the floor with clarity and equity
- ◆ state majority view in formal proposal and confirm agreement
- ◆ enhance verbal content by assurance, stance, tone and body language.

Section 4

In listening and responding in a participating group, you must show that you can:

- ◆ listen perceptively to range of queries and views
- ◆ recognise situations where there may be no clear answer
- ◆ provide coherent, well expressed response in variety of contexts
- ◆ demonstrate leadership in introducing new concepts, crystallising response and carrying debate forward constructively
- ◆ be prepared to modify, amplify and monitor own contributions as appropriate
- ◆ show ability to evaluate own and others' contributions
- ◆ work as part of a team, recognising others' input throughout.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE: ASSESSMENT TASKS

Introduction

English Speaking Board assessors work on the premise that each candidate is an individual with unique capability. Candidates are not compared with one another but judged on their own merit. All assessments are carried out within a listening, participating group so that candidates are constantly changing roles. The role of the group is to support each candidate in turn by responsive comment, discussion and questions. Each candidate's assessment involves participating as a member of this group.

General Preparation of Candidates

1. Each candidate should have access to a copy of the assessment syllabus and performance criteria, and should understand exactly what is required.
2. Candidates should be reminded to read the relevant advice on the back of the entry Report Forms. These forms should be correctly filled in before the date of the assessment and be available to the assessor at the beginning of the sessions.
3. As in all ESB assessments, the listening group is an important component of the assessment. Candidates are judged not only as speakers but also as active and supportive listeners and questioners. It is therefore important that they have an audience of at least five others. At levels 4 & 5 these listeners may not necessarily all be ESB candidates but must include one or two at the candidate's own level or above.
4. Candidates should know the order and approximate time for their own assessments. Procedure for the day should be planned so that changeovers are smooth and no time is lost.
5. Equipment brought to the assessments as back-up should be arranged so that:
 - a) it can be quickly set out for audience viewing
 - b) each article is relevant and referred to in the actual presentation
 - c) it can be quickly dismantled and cleared away.

SECTIONS (Assessment tasks)

General Guidance for Section 1 (presentation) and Section 4 (response and interaction).

Section 1 – Presentation to the group

- ◆ The talk/presentation should not be an extract from somebody else's lecture nor a digest of an encyclopaedia/magazine/internet article. Two or more candidates can work together as an alternative to a solo talk, provided that the contribution of each is comparable to that of a solo presentation
- ◆ As the higher levels, the candidate is increasingly showing independence of research, selection and organisation of the talk with matching facility in including informed comment as well as facts and providing a real stimulus for thought and response. By level 4 & 5, a professional attitude and sense of responsibility are expected as a natural basis.
- ◆ Where the talk is aimed at a specific audience the candidate should make this clear from the start and adjust his or her delivery accordingly. Most audiences will have a mix of some people who are familiar with a particular context and others who are not. It is part of the speaker's skills to allow for this without being either obscurely technical or 'talking down' to listeners.
- ◆ Notes if required should be reduced to headings or cue words and should not constitute a text; the written essay, read aloud or memorised, is unsuitable. Pauses for selection, reflection, and reception give power and a feeling of spontaneity. Non-stop speech, or speech which runs at a level pace or pitch is never memorable. Demonstration with verbal commentary is remembered by the eye and the ear. Above all, a genuine interest in the subject and vitality of delivery will bring the whole subject meaningfully and enjoyably alive for the listener.
- ◆ Demonstration material itself often provides the candidate with graphic note-headings and memory signposts. It can often be used to make a point vividly and quickly. On the other hand, where OHP acetates, slides, computer graphics, etc. are used, they should *illuminate* the talk and *not replace* verbal exposition.
- ◆ Candidates should keep their talks within the time allowed for this section. Where written back-up and amplification is required, the skills of research, selection, clarity and quality of presentation should be appropriate to the level.

Section 4 – Group interaction

Preparation of the candidates

- ◆ A confident, relaxed attitude is possible if the candidates feel secure. ‘Relaxed’ should not be confused with ‘casual’. Candidates need to be practised in the techniques of demonstration and orderly presentation if they are to feel at ease with their material. They also need to have explored their sources, subjects and opinions thoroughly to speak with clarity and conviction.
- ◆ As members of the listening group, candidates should be encouraged to ask questions which give the opportunity for further exploration of the subject rather than those which can be answered in one word. The assessor asks questions from genuine enquiry. He or she will not be trying to catch candidates out. The same kind of approach should be encouraged among the students who may need help in the early stages in framing open-ended questions.

Oral Skills in Business

Guidance for Sections 1 and 4 apply. In addition:

Level 2 – Section 2: Personal Interaction. Each of the three options in this section demands a mix of factual input and honest personal reflection and response while ensuring that the personal element remains relevant and avoids the risk of self-indulgence. Each option requires, too, that the speaker ‘sets the scene’ for the listeners to give a clear context.

Level 2 - Section 3: Telephone. The emphasis is on accuracy in understanding and noting information, so requires active listening and seeking clarification or confirmation where necessary. At any level there may also be a requirement to pass on a message accurately to a third party or to note details for follow-up action. It is valuable to have practice in recording name of caller and receiver, date and time, etc. as well as the actual content of calls.

There should also be evidence of effective use of time, with a friendly but businesslike response to ensure a positive ‘first impression’ for the individual or firm represented.

Level 3 – Section 2: Interview Skills. In outlining the job for the assessor, the candidate should ensure that both the assessor and the other listeners can hear and readily understand the requirements of the post selected. This may entail reading an existing advertisement or drawing one up that is appropriate – to include an indication of the scope of the job, the qualifications and main skills required, and any personal qualities mentioned. The candidate should clearly match his or her own abilities against each of these areas, indicating strengths but also indicating how any perceived weaknesses might be overcome. In asking and answering questions, the candidate should show that he or she has thought about the post in some depth and has taken the trouble to carry out some research on the company so that questions can anticipate possible developments in the job and show what the candidate can contribute. The CV should be crisp, accurate and laid out in a professional manner.

Level 3 – Section 3: Professional Briefing. A good clear, reasonably full context is required so the ‘junior employees’ can play their part in understanding the job, asking relevant questions and possibly raising queries on what they have been told. OHPs, acetates, computer imaging, posters or handouts may be appropriate. Language should be appropriate to the level of the employees concerned without ‘talking down’. The reading from company literature should maintain interest by lively interpretation and good eye contact. It should add understanding to the briefing. The written evaluation is intended to be interpretative, showing its value to the listeners, *not* just describing or summarising the extract.

Oral Skills in Management

Guidance for sections 1 and 4 apply. In addition:

Level 3 – Section 2: Current Affairs. The summary of the article should be crisply to the point and put over the writer's point of view. Careful preparation gives familiarity with the development of the piece and confidence in reading aloud so that the audience is alerted to the meaning. Good projection and eye contact make for easy understanding and assist the pacing to the listeners.

The letter to the editor should be set out as a letter to be sent by post or e-mail, and expressed in standard English with appropriate spelling, grammar, punctuation and use of vocabulary. It should set the scene so that the reader is reminded of the original tenor and thrust of the article, then make clear the writer's supportive or opposing view with logical, balanced reasons backing up the views expressed.

Level 3 – Section 3: Factual Reporting. The emphasis is on a 'formal' oral report, with OHP notes if required. It may help the speaker to follow the sequence of a written report to give a logical overall shape, i.e. Terms of Reference, Introduction, Findings, Conclusions and any Recommendations. The oral delivery should be used to help the listeners focus on the key aspects.

Professional Communication 4 & 5

Guidance for sections 1 and 4 apply. In addition:

Section 2 – Reading and evaluating

- ◆ Material of professional interest is included in this section. Where candidates are reading an extract, they should have read sufficient of the whole book, article or paper from which the extract is taken to put their excerpt in the context of the whole and be prepared to answer questions on it.
- ◆ Passages heavy with technical data are unsuitable for oral transmission. As a guide to timing, a passage of 140-150 words would probably take about one minute to read aloud.
- ◆ The assessor will expect an interpretative reading for the benefit of the listeners. Audibility, adequate pausing, phrasing, lively variety of tone and good eye contact are essential. The aim is to shape the piece for the listener. The introduction should alert the listeners to the purpose and key qualities of the item and so aid understanding and appreciation of the reading and its source.
- ◆ The written response should show evidence of an ability to select and communicate relevant points and, for a review, to give interpretative comment on content, approach and style, not just describe content. Tutors can help by drawing attention to the diversity of material readily available for most contexts.

Section 3 – Interview (level 4) and Discussion leading (level 5)

- ◆ **Interview:** The context of the job applied for, and the applicant's particular qualities, experience and skills must be made sufficiently clear to the audience to enable them to pose questions and comment with understanding, so that the candidate can answer a range of queries relevant to the post. A CV may be helpful and a written outline of the job requirements.

The candidate should consider his or her own weaknesses as well as strengths, and the possible constraints as well as the advantages of the post, so that there is a good basis for anticipating some of the questions and challenges that may arise. This will include considering what are the particular distinctive qualities that this individual can bring to the job and the way the post might develop. The interviewing panel should feel confidence in the candidate's skills, potential and ability both to take responsibilities appropriate to the level and to work with others.

- ◆ **Discussion Leading:** The discussion will usually be more effective if the candidate is talking from his or her own knowledge on a topic which may have relevance to the discussion group. It is vital that the topic is clearly explained, with the pros and cons where it may be controversial, so that the group can contribute fully and relevantly, to extrapolate from the basis given. Reference material may be appropriate.

In the opinion-finding part of the exercise, the candidate should be clearly in charge, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to contribute and, where appropriate, that amplification is sought or a potential balance to a point of view which makes a particular stance.

The summing up should take account of all the views expressed and seek a consensus or clear majority view, expressed in a precise, accurate formal proposal acceptable to the group.

Preparation of the room

- ◆ Assessments can be held on any premises or offices suitable for the subject. The majority of presentations take place in a normal classroom or lecture room: this should be arranged to give the listening group the right conditions for close participation. The room should be cleared as far as possible of unwanted tables and other furniture and the group arranged in a horse-shoe with the speaker's position at the open end. This makes for easy eye contact between the speaker and each member of the group, and provides an open space in front of the speaker which may be used for demonstrations, impromptu work, telephoning, etc.
 - ◆ The assessor's table should be set as part of the horse-shoe, not in the centre. From this position the assessor can act effectively as a link between candidates and listeners when necessary, and observe both with ease.
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LEVEL DESCRIPTORS 1-5

QCA NVQ Level Descriptors*

These level descriptors are intended to be indicative rather than prescriptive.

Level 1

Competences that involve the application of knowledge and skills in the performance of a range of varied work activities, most of which may be routine or predictable.

Level 2

Competences that involve the application of knowledge and skills in a significant range of varied work activities, performed in a variety of contexts. At this level, there must be activities that are complex or non-routine and some individual responsibility and autonomy. Collaboration with others, perhaps through membership of a work group or team, may often be a requirement.

Level 3

Competences which involve the application of knowledge and skills in a broad range of complex technical or professional work activities performed in a wide variety of contexts, most of which are complex and non-routine. There is considerable responsibility and autonomy, and control or guidance of others is often required.

Level 4

Competences which involve the application of knowledge and skills in a broad range of complex technical or professional work activities performed in a wide variety of contexts and with a substantial degree of personal responsibility and autonomy. Responsibility for the work of others and the allocation of resources is often present.

Level 5

Competences which involve the application of skills and a significant range of fundamental principles across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts. Very substantial personal autonomy and often significant responsibility for the work of others and for the allocation of substantial resources feature strongly, as do personal accountabilities for analysis and diagnosis, design, planning, execution and evaluation.

* from: Arrangements for the Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. QCA 2000.

ESB: Candidates with Particular Requirements

ESB is committed to meeting the needs of all those with particular assessment requirements. Some general principles apply as outlined below; but we ask that all tutors who have such candidates contact the Board in advance of assessment, for individual needs are met on an individual basis. (For Certificate of Achievement entries, where all candidates have learning difficulties and special arrangements already apply, only specific requirements need to be notified in advance – e.g. multiple handicap or severe behavioural problems.)

- ◆ Tutors are asked to alert the assessor to any specific problems when contacting him/her to discuss general arrangements in advance of assessment.
- ◆ In selecting, appointing and training ESB assessors, the Board is acutely aware of the importance of an understanding, sensitive and supportive approach to all learners, (and particularly where there are any special requirements) without compromising assessment standards.
- ◆ Where learners have particular requirements, tutors are encouraged to take an interactive role in interpreting needs, assisting with any specialist equipment that may be required and generally using their knowledge of the candidate to help ensure the optimum conditions for success.
- ◆ Specialist equipment may be utilised as required. Specialist staff (e.g. speech therapist) may be utilised in consultation with the Board.

Pointers include:

Learning Difficulties – General

All Certificate of Achievement syllabuses are specifically designed to take account of learning difficulties.

The Board provides assessors who, in addition to undertaking the mainstream examiner training and general annual training session, are also required to attend additional specialist training led by the designated Officer for Certificate of Achievement assessments.

The Guidelines spell out key provision, i.e.

- ◆ The assessor takes a conductive role to guide the candidate into success
- ◆ Time is allowed before the assessment (usually about quarter of an hour) for the assessor to meet the candidates informally to help establish a friendly and positive atmosphere
- ◆ The time allowance is more generous than that for mainstream candidates at introductory levels, allowing both for varying timing within each section according to the need for guidance and averaging 20 minutes per candidate overall
- ◆ Breaks can be arranged to suit the felt need where powers of sitting, listening and concentration are limited
- ◆ The assessor's lead-in tactics and physical arrangements between presentations may take longer than is usual in ESB assessments
- ◆ Auxiliary staff or specialists – e.g. a speech therapist – may give specialist support without supplanting the requirement that it is the individual candidate who must meet the criteria.

Impaired Hearing

Where candidates have the ability, they are encouraged to follow a mainstream syllabus. If hearing is seriously impaired, additional time will be given (normally 50% for each task).

Where hearing impairment would hinder ready understanding, e.g. by a potential employer, the certificate will be endorsed 'Hearing Impaired' while allowing the candidate to achieve the intellectual level and grade of which he is capable.

Dyslexia

Normally additional time allowed for reading – 50% - with the candidate's own choice of passage for prior practice where (e.g. Senior Grades) the assessor would normally choose an extract from a longer prepared section.

Impaired Sight

If a candidate reads braille, additional time – 50% - will be allowed for reading. The candidate may choose his or her own passage for prior practice in any syllabus where normally the assessor would choose a sight reading.

Where a candidate does not read braille, a pre-recorded tape is acceptable, built up by the candidate from listening to other readers (preferably a variety) and developing his or her own interpretation.

Where extended reading would cause particular problems, the selected passage may be limited to 100-150 words if this is shorter than the length of time specified for a particular component.

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REGISTERED IN ENGLAND COMPANY No. 01269980. REGISTERED AS A CHARITY No. 272565