



Level Four Award in Professional Presentation Skills

English Speaking
Board

Level 4



QA NUMBER – 600\0556\7



ENGLISH SPEAKING BOARD (INTERNATIONAL) LTD.

SPECIFICATIONS FOR ESB LEVEL FOUR AWARD IN PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATION SKILLS

1. Introduction

The Professional Presentation Skills assessment qualification at Level 4 is designed primarily as an endorsement accreditation for candidates whose professional training involves or would benefit from spoken presentation skills. It may also be used as the context and assessment for a training programme/module which focuses on Communication (or specific presentation skills). It comprises two Sections for delivery – Presentation and Questions and Discussion. The use of visual aids / demonstration materials is also taken into account in assessing outcomes.

2. Aims & Objectives

The overall aim of Professional Presentation Skills is to promote clear, effective, confident and courteous oral communication and response in a professional context, in an exchange of knowledge, skills and views

Specifically, the assessment programme aims to:

- provide encouragement and opportunities for candidates to research, structure and deliver their own choice of material from a position of authority
- develop candidates' ability to communicate directly, cogently and with vitality to a participating group of peers, adapting strategies for purpose and audience
- give practice in designing and integrating visual aids professionally within the presentation
- promote the ability to question, answer and discuss effectively in an open exchange of ideas, including the ability to evaluate own contributions and those of others
- provide a supportive context for assessment which is itself part of the learning experience
- provide enhancement for vocational and general career development

3. Target Groups

The Professional Presentation Skills programme is appropriate for a wide range of candidates, in particular for:

- those in work or training at supervisory level or above who require an endorsement for oral proficiency as part of their professional competence
- those wishing to enhance communication skills as part of their general career development/CPD, often on a short communications course
- graduates on job seeking courses – e.g. Graduate Accelerated Programmes
- mature candidates wishing to return to work or 'brush up' oral communication skills as part of an access to work course

4. Learning Outcomes

At Professional Presentation Skills Level 4, you will be able to apply thinking, speaking and listening skills and strategies with discrimination and evaluation to show that you can

- Select and apply appropriate research techniques to complement personal knowledge
- Present relevant information and concepts in a coherent structure, with signposting and effective generation and use of visual aids and/or demonstration
- Deliver a presentation with professional authority, engaging audience through spontaneity, pacing and vocal variety
- Use vocabulary and language structure to enhance delivery and understanding
- Interact with others in answering, questioning and discussion with perception, critical awareness and imaginative empathy

5. Progression

Progression routes will depend on the context:

- Where the syllabus is used as part of a training course at work, certification can help candidates to progress to higher positions within employment.
- Where the syllabus has been used to accredit a free-standing communications course, it is expected that the candidate will use it as part of career development, gaining certificated evidence of enhanced professional oral communication skills.
- Where the syllabus is used as part of a parent course, the progression for that course will usually determine the next stage – e.g. to higher education or employment
- Within the ESB context, lateral or linear progression is available through other ESB assessment qualifications, such as Speaking & Listening Skills for Adult Learners: Higher Certificate at level 4 which may be applied in a vocational or social/personal context, and Professional Communication, levels 4-5 which are part of ESB's Business & Management series. Each of these programmes comprises four assessment sections.
- The Teachers' Certificate at levels 4-5 is available to teachers in training or qualified teachers, also the ESB Diploma at Level 5.

6. Preparation for Professional Presentation Skills – guideline notes

The PPS syllabus gives the timing for the two mandatory assessment sections. The overall timing allowed for each individual is 25 minutes, with the presentation timed for 10-15 minutes and 5-10 minutes allocated for questions, response and discussion following the presentation.

In preparing and delivering material to a participating peer group, candidates are aiming to develop skills, knowledge and understanding to meet the learning outcomes.

At this level, candidates should demonstrate a good degree of initiative and self-reliance in determining selection of material, research and delivery strategies; but supportive guidance and mentoring will be invaluable in confirming direction and helping to develop and enhance appropriate skills and confidence.

- 1 Delivery methods for the programme will include a mix of one-to-one tuition and guidance, whole group sessions and possibly peer work in pairs or small groups, plus support for research strategies where needed.
- 2 One of the most important aspects of preparation will be to build confidence by ensuring sound knowledge, practice for familiarity, use of visual aids to act as visual 'notes' and the emphasis on encouragement both for individual progress and for teamwork.
- 3 As the final assessment is held in a participating group, with candidates credited as both speakers and responders, it is expected that delivery methods will include:
 - practice in sharing communication with the group, with feedback from tutor and peers
 - encouragement of professional approach and self-presentation, including quality of visual aids and disciplined use of time
 - group practice in listening perceptively and constructively, asking and answering open-ended queries, and practice in joining in discussion to amplify points or take the subject forward
 - practice in defending facts and opinions but developing ability to modify opinions in face of valid argument for alternative viewpoint and to evaluate outcomes

7. Guided Learning Hours

As the focal point for an intensive short course (one week) or communications module/unit (often running over ten weeks), it is recommended that the PPS programme is allocated 20-30 hours on a flexible basis of tuition (one-to-one and group) and guided study/research. Alternatively, it may complement a 'parent' course running over 30 weeks, depending on the course context.

8. 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. (A briefer advance timescale for short, regular roll-on, roll-off courses may be negotiated with the Board.)
- Centres are asked to give a choice of two preferred dates for the assessment session. The administrative team at ESB's head office provides 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.
- New/potential centres may request a visit from an Information Officer to discuss planning and content in advance of the first assessment. This can be arranged with the Examinations Co-ordinator at head office. There is no cost or obligation to the centre for this service.
- All new centres are required to complete Centre Approval documentation.

9. Assessment

The recommended maximum number of candidates for assessment in Professional Presentation Skills is 12 for one examiner in a day to allow for individual time schedules, changeover and breaks. For larger numbers the Board can provide additional examiner(s) on the same day or assessments may be run over consecutive days.

Each candidate must present to a minimum audience of 5 to allow for full interaction. There may be occasions where not all members of the audience are entrants for PPS or entrants for the same ESB assessment syllabus.

Organisation

- All assessment by ESB is external, led by a trained visiting assessor from the ESB national examiner team
- The tutor is given the ESB assessor's name in advance and asked to make contact to discuss the day and put any queries or alert the assessor where the candidate has particular needs
- Prior to the assessment, usually at least a week in advance, the centre will receive report sheets for each candidate. Before the assessment day the candidate should fill in appropriate headings to the report sheet, ready for the assessor on the day.
- Candidates will be assessed as part of a participating group on their 'home ground'. The audience consists of a peer group, with tutor(s) and any other invited internal or external visitors – at the discretion of the centre. (Occasionally a centre may be asked to accept a trainee assessor sitting in with the appointed examiner.)

Method

- The assessment group should be seated in a horseshoe with the assessor at one end and the speaker in the mouth of the horseshoe. This allows for easy eye contact across the group and ensures the assessor is part of the audience without splitting the group or directly 'eyeballing' the speaker.
- Assessment (which is, therefore, very transparent), is based on each individual's demonstrable ability to meet the assessment outcomes by fulfilling the criteria, including the ability of the speaker to participate in turn as part of the listening, responding audience. The assessment process and outcome is independent but the tutor is invited to sit in as part of the audience.
- The assessor assesses each candidate in turn, in the presence of the group
- The assessor in turn demonstrates good listening skills throughout while writing comments on each report sheet. The assessor is also careful to encourage positive group interaction throughout the session
- Although there is no 'judging by numbers', the talk/presentation accounts for a maximum of 60% of the award, response and interaction for 30% and the use of a.v. aids and equipment for 10%.
- Within the level, the assessor is judging the correct grading* for the outcome.

The assessment session is designed to be a supportive, non-competitive experience.

Awarding & Reporting Attainment

- The assessor provides general oral feedback to the group at assessment.
- The ESB assessor also provides a specific written report for each candidate on each aspect of the assessment, with guidance where needed for future progress. These reports are returned to the centre following assessment, normally within five working days. Results are provisional prior to certification to allow for standardisation.
- All successful candidates receive a certificate giving the syllabus, level and grade of pass.
- Both assessor and tutor supply independent reports to the Board (pro formas supplied) on the conduct and outcome of the assessment session.

***Grading**

Grading gives articulation between levels and helps to measure readiness for a higher level. Given the basic achievement of a task, grading is based on evidence of the degree of overall discrimination and effectiveness in selecting and organising material for presentation and illustration and on fluency and confidence in mastering techniques and sharing communication with an audience.

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

Pass = 50%

Merit = 75+

Distinction = 90+

Guidelines for Organisers summarises guidance for preparation for the assessment day and its process.

ESB	PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATION SKILLS	<i>Grading Criteria</i>
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Section	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Presentation 60%	Show evidence of relevant research & planning complementing personal knowledge Use logical basic structure, with development and sequencing Make presentation with some authority, observing time limits Deliver presentation clearly, with evidence of vocal variety and appropriate pace Show awareness of audience in eye contact and body language Communicate topic with appropriate use of language and register	Balance factual information and personal experience, signposted and delivered with evaluative comment Engage listeners with vitality and spontaneity	Engage listeners throughout by professional presence, cogently blended information and views Adapt strategies, language and register for purpose and audience
Use of audio/visual aids 10%	Select suitable a.v. aids devised for theme and audience, with brief reference notes if needed Integrate a.v. appropriately in presentation Handle any technical equipment appropriately	Show skilful generation, use and integration of v.a. throughout. Show confidence in handling technical equipment, including dealing with hitches	Demonstrate a.v aids graphically executed for theme, audience and time, integrated to illuminate but not dominate
Response and Interaction 30%	Demonstrate relevant answers on own sections, amplifying where appropriate Make appropriate queries and comments on others' input Make sincere efforts to handle ranging views Demonstrate support as a member of the group	Show good ability to handle concepts as well as facts with confidence and authority Demonstrate a balanced input, to include a constructively critical approach while supporting others	Show discrimination and insight in initiating, debating and evaluating facts and concepts with perception and empathy

This is a best fit profile

The English Speaking Board was established in 1953 to promote and encourage excellence in all aspects of oral communication. The Board provides a full range of graded assessments for education, business and the community.

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