

ATTACHMENT 10

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY ORAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION GUIDE

The English oral fluency exam is based on a language proficiency rating scale of 1-5. To pass the English oral fluency examination, candidates must receive a score of 4 or higher on the three sections of the exam: photograph explanation, extemporaneous questions, and passage explanation.

Performance Description Level 5

Candidate's proficiency consistently exceeds minimum standards of competence as defined in *Language Proficiency Rating Level 4*.

- Performs well in language situations that may change unexpectedly or are unfamiliar
- Discourse is cohesive and coherent
- Grasps and clearly conveys meaning; is able to differentiate shades of meaning between words and process complete content of message in a cohesive discourse
- Demonstrates broad vocabulary and ability to convey abstract concepts
- Demonstrates extensive knowledge of specialized vocabulary
- Uses words appropriately (distinguishes among words of similar meaning and selects the most appropriate term for the context.) Distinguishes between denotative and connotative meanings
- Recognizes and appropriately uses a broad range of idioms, proverbs, collocations, and sayings
- Demonstrates full grammatical and structural control (absence of patterns of error)
- Demonstrates sociolinguistic competence and full control of register
- Demonstrates knowledge of cultural nuance and references
- Rate of delivery (fluency) is adequate (reasonable intervals between utterances)
- Accent does not interfere with the listener's comprehension
- Speaks clearly (enunciation, pronunciation, stress, intonation, and tone) and conveys meaning and nuance

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Performance Description Level 4

Candidate's proficiency **meets minimum standards** of competence.

- Language proficiency is sufficient for situations that may change unexpectedly or are unfamiliar.
- Discourse is cohesive and coherent
- Grasps and clearly conveys meaning; is generally able to differentiate shades of meaning between words and process complete content of message
- Demonstrates broad vocabulary and ability to convey abstract concepts
- Demonstrates requisite level of specialized vocabulary
- Generally uses words appropriately (distinguishes among words of similar meaning and selects the most appropriate term for the context). Distinguishes between denotative and connotative meanings
- Demonstrates familiarity with idioms, proverbs, collocations, and sayings
- Demonstrates full structural control (absence of patterns of error). Occasional errors in complex and/or low frequency structures do not interfere with meaning
- Exhibits infrequent grammatical errors that do not interfere with meaning
- Generally uses language in a sociolinguistically appropriate manner (i.e., tailors the language to the situation at hand; reflects the speech patterns of a wide variety of sociocultural backgrounds); varies register appropriately
- Demonstrates knowledge of cultural nuance and references
- Rate of delivery (fluency) is adequate (reasonable intervals between utterances)
- Accent does not interfere with the listener's comprehension
- Demonstrates general ability to speak clearly (enunciation, pronunciation, stress, intonation, and tone) and to convey meaning and nuance appropriately

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Performance Description Level 3

Candidate's proficiency **does not meet minimum standards** of competence as defined in *Language Proficiency Rating Level 4* due to deficiencies in performance *which taken in aggregate* affect meaning. These may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Language proficiency is limited to the familiar
- Discourse lacks cohesiveness and coherence
- Demonstrates limited comprehension (grasps meaning in fragments but is unable to consistently process complete content of message in a cohesive discourse)
- Demonstrates knowledge of basic vocabulary (familiar); however, may be unable to convey abstract concepts
- Lacks requisite level of specialized vocabulary needed to competently perform the duties of an interpreter
- Demonstrates some knowledge of specialized vocabulary but ability to contextualize it is limited
- Misuses words (unable to distinguish among words of similar meaning and select the most appropriate term for the context.) Fails to distinguish between denotative and connotative meanings
- Occasionally distorts and/or invents words
- Occasionally misuses the wrong word for the context
- Demonstrates limited familiarity with idioms, proverbs, collocations, and sayings
- Demonstrates partial structural control (patterns of error in language structure interfere with meaning), requiring the listener to compensate for missing or erroneous structural elements
- Demonstrates patterns of grammatical errors
- Demonstrates a limited ability to use language in a sociolinguistically appropriate manner (i.e., deviates from the rules of social discourse; is unable to reflect the speech patterns of a wide variety of sociocultural backgrounds); exhibits lapses in ability to vary register appropriately
- Demonstrates limited knowledge of cultural nuance and references
- Rate of delivery (i.e. fluency) is sometimes inadequate (lengthy pauses, hurried speech) and may interfere with communication
- Accent sometimes interferes with the listener's comprehension

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- Demonstrates basic ability to speak clearly (enunciation, pronunciation, stress, intonation, and tone), but fails to convey meaning and nuance

Performance Description Level 2

Candidate's proficiency is **below minimum standards** of competence as defined in *Language Proficiency Rating Level 4*, due to deficiencies in performance which, taken in aggregate, affect meaning. These may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Language proficiency is limited to basic communication (i.e. everyday and concrete topics)
- Fails to communicate beyond the paragraph level
- Demonstrates very limited comprehension; ability to process complete content of message is limited
- Demonstrates basic level of vocabulary
- May demonstrate superficial knowledge of specialized vocabulary but is unable to contextualize it
- Frequently misuses words (unable to distinguish among words of similar sound, form, or meaning)
- Frequently distorts and/or invents words
- Demonstrates minimal familiarity with idioms, proverbs, collocations, and sayings
- Demonstrates minimal structural control (frequent patterns of error in language structure interfere with meaning)
- Demonstrates patterns of significant grammatical error
- Demonstrates very limited ability to use language in a sociolinguistically appropriate manner (i.e. frequently deviates from the rules of social discourse; is unable to reflect the speech patterns of different sociocultural backgrounds); unable to vary register appropriately
- Rate of delivery (i.e. fluency) is often inadequate (lengthy pauses between utterances interfere with communication)
- Accent constantly interferes with the listener's comprehension
- Frequently fails to demonstrate a basic ability to speak clearly (enunciation, pronunciation, stress, intonation, and tone) and to convey meaning and nuance

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Performance Description Level 1

Candidate's proficiency is significantly below minimum standards of competence as defined in *Language Proficiency Rating Level 4*, due to deficiencies in performance which, *taken in aggregate*, affect meaning. These may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Language proficiency is limited to basic communication with frequent and severe errors
- Fails to communicate beyond the word or sentence level
- Demonstrates almost no comprehension (i.e. unable to grasp meaning of words or sentences)
- Demonstrates rudimentary vocabulary
- Consistently misuses words (unable to distinguish among words of similar sound, form, or meaning)
- Consistently distorts and/or invents words
- Demonstrates little or no familiarity with idioms, proverbs, collocations, and sayings
- Demonstrates some awareness of some structures, but unable to use them correctly
- Demonstrates patterns of serious and persistent grammatical error
- Demonstrates an inability to use language in a sociolinguistically appropriate manner; demonstrates no awareness of the rules of social discourse of speech register
- Rate of delivery (i.e., fluency) is inadequate (lengthy intervals between utterances interfere with communication)
- Accent is so severe that it makes communication nearly impossible
- Consistently fails to demonstrate a basic ability to speak clearly (enunciation, pronunciation, stress, intonation, and tone) and to convey meaning and nuance