

National Language Standards

(revised 2005)

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

The *National Language Standards* are approved by the UK Co-ordinating Group¹ as the UK occupational standards for languages in the workplace. *The National Language Standards* are one of a suite of national occupational standards maintained by CILT, the National Centre for Languages.

CILT, the National Centre for Languages is the UK's centre of expertise for language and intercultural skills. We aim:

- to build capacity in language and intercultural skills across all phases of education and in all occupational sectors;
- to enhance the competitiveness of UK industry and promote social inclusion through the development and recognition of language skills;
- to support language service professionals, e.g. language teachers and trainers, interpreters, translators and cultural consultants.

What are the National Language Standards?

The *National Language Standards* were first created in 1993 by the then Languages Lead Body and reviewed by its successor, the Languages National Training Organisation. In 2003, the Languages NTO merged with the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research to form CILT, the National Centre for Languages.

The *National Language Standards* set out what you have to be able to do and the knowledge and skills you need to understand and use language competently in work settings. The Standards are designed to be used in various ways - the main ones are outlined below.

Employers can use them to diagnose what language skills employees have, to identify what skills are needed to achieve business objectives and to recruit multilingual staff.

Trainers can use them to benchmark skills levels and devise training programmes.

Learners can use them to assess their own levels of skill and set targets for their own progression.

Awarding bodies use them as the basis for National/Scottish Vocational Qualification (N/SVQ) language units and the framework for calibrating vocationally-related qualifications (VRQs).

Which languages?

The Standards can be applied to any language and any occupational setting. They are primarily intended to be applied to those using and/or learning a language which is not their first language, though in practice there may be exceptions to this.

The *National Language Standards (revised 2005)* have been developed in close consultation with experts from a range of education and industry sectors, and from the sign language field. They are applicable both to spoken and sign languages.

Where terms are not wholly applicable to sign language (e.g. 'listen' and 'speak') clarification has been provided in the **Glossary of linguistic terms**.

¹ The UK Co-ordinating Group oversees and approves national occupational standards. The group comprises representatives of SQA, QCA, ACCAC, SSDA, the Scottish Executive, DfES and CCEA.

Overall structure

The *National Language Standards* are set at the five levels of the N/SVQ framework, plus Entry level. They are aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and to the new national recognition scheme in England, the Languages Ladder.

The Standards are set out as a series of 24 Units, with one unit representing a single linguistic skill at a particular level. The four linguistic skills are:

- Listening (the 'Receptive' units for sign language users);
- Speaking (the 'Productive' units for sign language users);
- Reading;
- Writing.

The Listening/Receptive units and Speaking/Productive units are each subdivided into two Elements. The first element deals with one-way communication; the second element covers two-way or group interaction.

The **General framework** shows at a glance the units and elements which make up the *National Language Standards* and describes briefly what you should be able to do at each level.

National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications

The *National Language Standards* form the basis of N/SVQ language units (levels 1-5 only). These can be awarded in the following ways:

- as stand-alone, independently accredited units;
- as optional or additional units within other vocational qualifications;
- as part of a full N/SVQ in a language.

This system is designed to be flexible, so that those candidates who only need certain linguistic skills for their jobs, or those who have different levels of competence in the different linguistic skills, can achieve accreditation according to their needs and abilities. Those who achieve all the mandatory units at a particular level are awarded a full N/SVQ.

Assessment of language competence via the N/SVQ route has two important benefits:

- The language units can be used flexibly for assessing the individual's competence as and when appropriate; there is no rigid exam timetable.
- Individuals can keep evidence of their performance in the workplace, or in simulated conditions, and include this as appropriate in their portfolio of evidence.

Assessment of N/SVQ language units

Competence in any one of the four skill areas of language is linear and cumulative. A learner being assessed at a given level (with the exception of Entry level) will therefore be assumed to have acquired the competence, knowledge and skills for the previous level (or levels) for the skill area in question.

The **Unit overview** describes what you would expect to be able to do in order to achieve the unit question. It provides examples of the sorts of work task you should be able to undertake and the level of accuracy you should reach. This section is designed to give a helpful summary of the

remainder of the unit, but should not be used as part of the formal assessment process.

Each unit is made up of one or two **Elements**, which list the **Performance criteria** for that unit. These define the 'outcomes' which you should be able to achieve in using or understanding a language. They are not meant to be ticked off singly, but are interlinked. A competent language user will usually demonstrate all performance criteria in the course of a task. If a piece of evidence gathered in the workplace does not meet all the performance criteria (e.g. a form which does not request details of 'feeling, needs or preferences', for W1) the criteria in question must be met elsewhere.

The **Range** section sets out the contexts, modes of communication and formats which the user must be able to handle. These must all be covered somewhere in the total evidence for each unit, but not within a single task.

The **Knowledge and skills** statements describe the general linguistic skills which learners need to acquire to achieve the outcomes described by the performance criteria. This section can be used to help plan training programmes and to identify knowledge and skills which need further development. It should not be used as a checklist to be recorded for assessment. If the criteria are properly applied, the user will normally demonstrate the required knowledge and skills if he/she achieves the outcomes specified.

Awarding bodies for N/SVQ language units are responsible for the minimum performance evidence requirements and for all procedures within the assessment, verification and accreditation process.

As a general rule, however, there must be enough evidence to support a safe inference that the user can achieve the Standards in each unit consistently.

Assessment strategy

CILT, the National Centre for Languages has devised an assessment strategy, in consultation with employers, practitioners and awarding bodies, for N/SVQs based on the *National Language Standards*. The assessment strategy sets out a series of measures, which go beyond those traditionally associated with N/SVQs to meet the NVQ Code of Practice and SQA equivalent requirements, to ensure consistency in assessment.

External quality control

To ensure consistent and appropriate quality control, awarding bodies must comply with the following measures.

- (a) Awarding bodies must conduct a system of centre risk rating. This must be based on a number of factors, including:
- centre's track-record;
 - number and experience of assessors/internal verifiers;
 - qualification levels of assessors/internal verifiers;
 - candidate numbers/turnover.

The outcome of risk rating must determine the action taken. Where a centre is deemed to be 'high risk', for example, the frequency of external verifier visits and level of support given by the awarding body must increase.

Awarding bodies must inform the National Centre for Languages of arrangements for the continuing professional development of External Verifiers and invite input as appropriate. The National Centre for Languages will convene meetings of Lead/Chief Verifiers, as necessary, to promote best practice and consistency in implementation. Awarding bodies not represented at these events will be required to take into account any conclusions reached.

Performance in the workplace

Naturally occurring work-based evidence is generally the best source of evidence for the assessment of N/SVQs. There are, however, special constraints on the assessment of language competence.

Most candidates are working in environments which require irregular, rather than consistent, use of the target language. Moreover, assessors are usually language trainers external to the workplace. Use of an external assessor in the workplace is likely to be:

- (a) impractical, because the assessor might have to wait a long time before an authentic task arises from the user's normal work;
- (b) costly, because the assessors would have to be paid for their attendance.

Moreover, real workplace evidence of language competence may be of a confidential nature and therefore not appropriate for sharing with an external assessor.

Simulation

If workplace evidence cannot be provided, simulations are acceptable. The National Centre for Languages recognises that language tasks can occur naturally even though the environment is 'simulated' (e.g. set up by a trainer in a classroom), as long as it is not scripted or rehearsed. Simulations should mirror the potential or actual workplace environment.

Occupational expertise of assessors and verifiers

Assessors, internal verifiers and external verifiers must hold or be working towards appropriate assessor/verifier qualifications, as currently required by the regulatory authorities.

Additionally, awarding bodies must ensure that assessors/verifiers meet the following occupational expertise requirements.

Assessors must hold a qualification in the language they assess, at least at one level above that being assessed, or be a native speaker. Native speakers must prove to awarding bodies that they are occupationally competent. Where units at levels 4 and 5 are concerned, non-native speaker assessors must be qualified at least to the level being assessed.

Assessors must also have:

- relevant experience of using the target language within the last 5 years, including regular interaction with native speakers;
- knowledge and understanding of competence-based qualifications;
- in-depth knowledge of the *National Language Standards*.

Internal verifiers must hold a qualification in the language assessed, at least at one level above that assessed, or be a native speaker. Native speakers must prove to awarding bodies that they are occupationally competent. Where units at levels 4 and 5 are concerned, non-native speaker verifiers must be qualified at least to the level being assessed.

Internal verifiers must also have:

- sufficient expertise to enable them to verify assessment decisions and give advice to assessors;
- knowledge and understanding of competence-based qualifications;
- in-depth knowledge of the *National Language Standards*.

Internal verifiers who are not fully competent in the language assessed must hold a qualification in another language. In this case, an expert witness should be appointed, if necessary, to advise on issues related to levels of language competence. These arrangements must be agreed by the awarding body.

External verifiers must be qualified to level 4 or above in or be a native speaker of a language other than English. Native speakers must prove to awarding bodies that they are occupationally competent. Where the language assessed is at levels 4 or 5, the external verifier must be qualified at least to the level being assessed.

External verifiers must also have:

- sufficient expertise in language in the language assessed to enable them to verify assessment decisions and to advise assessors, internal verifiers and centres on the quality and consistency of assessment and verification systems and practices;
- knowledge and understanding of competence-based qualifications;
- in-depth knowledge of the *National Language Standards* and the awarding body quality assurance procedures.

If the external verifier is not fully competent in the language assessed, an expert witness should be appointed, if necessary, to advise on issues related to levels of language competence.

National/Scottish Vocational Qualification structure

In order to be awarded a full N/SVQ in language, candidates must achieve all mandatory units in a given target language. This structure has been designed in response to employer demand and has industry endorsement.

Where candidates require only certain linguistic skills (e.g. reading and writing) to perform their jobs, the units can alternatively be awarded as stand-alone, fully accredited units.

Qualification titles for sign and spoken languages follow the same convention, for example: 'Level 1 N/SVQ in French'; or 'Level 3 N/SVQ in British Sign Language'.

Level 1 N/SVQ (spoken language)

Mandatory units

Unit	Element
L1 Listen to simple language in familiar work contexts	L1.1 Extract information from simple statements or descriptions L1.2 Follow simple, predictable conversations
S1 Speak using simple language in familiar work contexts	S1.1 Give simple, prepared statements or descriptions S1.2 Take part in simple, predictable conversations
R1 Read simple text on familiar work topics	R1.1 Extract information from signs, notices and simple correspondence
W1 Write simple text on familiar work topics	W1.1 Complete forms and create simple correspondence

Level 1 N/SVQ (sign language)

Mandatory units

Unit	Element
L1 Listen to simple language in familiar work contexts [RECEPTIVE]	L1.1 Extract information from simple statements or descriptions L1.2 Follow simple, predictable conversations
S1 Speak using simple language in familiar work contexts [PRODUCTIVE]	S1.1 Give simple, prepared statements or descriptions S1.2 Take part in simple, predictable conversations

Level 2 N/SVQ (spoken language)

Mandatory units

Unit	Element
L2 Listen to routine language in everyday work contexts	L2.1 Extract information from routine statements, descriptions or explanations L2.2 Understand routine conversations
S2 Speak using routine language in everyday work contexts	S2.1 Give routine descriptions and explanations S2.2 Take part in routine conversations
R2 Read routine text on everyday work topics	R2.1 Extract information from routine notices, reports and correspondence
W2 Write routine text on everyday work topics	W2.1 Create routine records, reports and correspondence

Level 2 N/SVQ (sign language)

Mandatory units

Unit	Element
L2 Listen to routine language in everyday work contexts [RECEPTIVE]	L2.1 Extract information from routine statements, descriptions or explanations L2.2 Understand routine conversations
S2 Speak using routine language in everyday work contexts [PRODUCTIVE]	S2.1 Give routine descriptions and explanations S2.2 Take part in routine conversations

Level 3 N/SVQ (spoken language)

Mandatory units

Unit	Element
L3 Listen to varied language in a range of work contexts	L3.1 Understand varied accounts, reports and instructions L3.2 Understand varied discussions
S3 Speak using varied language in a range of work contexts	S3.1 Give varied accounts, reports and instructions S3.2 Take part in varied discussions
R3 Read varied text on a range of work topics	R3.1 Understand varied articles, reports and correspondence
W3 Write varied text on a range of work topics	W3.1 Write varied summaries, reports and correspondence

Level 3 N/SVQ (sign language)

Mandatory units

Unit	Element
L3 Listen to varied language in a range of work contexts [RECEPTIVE]	L3.1 Understand varied accounts, reports and instructions L3.2 Understand varied discussions
S3 Speak using varied language in a range of work contexts [PRODUCTIVE]	S3.1 Give varied accounts, reports and instructions S3.2 Take part in varied discussions

Level 4 N/SVQ (spoken language)

Mandatory units

Unit	Element
L4 Listen to complex language in a wide range of work contexts	L4.1 Understand complex presentations or talks L4.2 Understand complex discussions
S4 Speak using complex language in a wide range of work contexts	S4.1 Deliver complex, prepared talks S4.2 Take part in complex discussions and meetings
R4 Read complex text on a wide range of work topics	R4.1 Understand complex reports, proposals and correspondence

Level 4 N/SVQ (sign language)

Mandatory units

Unit	Element
L4 Listen to complex language in a wide range of work contexts [RECEPTIVE]	L4.1 Understand complex presentations or talks L4.2 Understand complex discussions
S4 Speak using complex language in a wide range of work contexts [PRODUCTIVE]	S4.1 Deliver complex, prepared talks S4.2 Take part in complex discussions and meetings

Level 5 N/SVQ (spoken language)

Mandatory units

Unit	Element
L5 Listen to complex and specialist language in all work contexts	L5.1 Understand complex and specialised presentations or talks L5.2 Understand complex and specialised group discussions
S5 Speak using complex and specialist language in all work contexts	S5.1 Deliver complex, specialised and unscripted talks S5.2 Take part in complex and specialised group discussions
R5 Read complex and specialist text on all work topics	R5.1 Understand complex and specialised reports, discussion papers and correspondence
W5 Write complex and specialist text on all work topics	W5.1 Write complex and specialised reports, specifications and correspondence

Level 5 N/SVQ (sign language)

Mandatory units

Unit	Element
L5 Listen to complex and specialist language in all work contexts	L5.1 Understand complex and specialised presentations or talks L5.2 Understand complex and specialised group discussions
S5 Speak using complex and specialist language in all work contexts	S5.1 Deliver complex, specialised and unscripted talks S5.2 Take part in complex and specialised group discussions

Key and core skills signposting

Guidance

The aims of key/core skills signposting are twofold:

- to indicate where tasks which generate evidence towards N/SVQ language units may provide suitable evidence for key/core Skills accreditation;
- to map the *National Language Standards* against the key and core skills levels.

The signposting is based on the principle that evidence for one or more of the key/core skills may arise when the candidate is working towards the N/SVQ language units. The evidence will depend on the environment in which the candidate is training or working. The links between the *National Language Standards* and key/core skills are not automatic or prescriptive. In particular, assessors and candidates should be aware that the nature and level of the language used in the target language may affect the mapping against the Communication Skills.

When considering the inclusion of evidence for key/core skills, assessors and candidates should note the following points:

- the level and use of the target language², which may affect the validity and sufficiency of the evidence presented towards key/core skills .
- the requirements set out in the key/core skills documentation for the length, context, vocabulary choice and style of language;
- the need for accuracy of the productive skills of speaking and writing as required for key/core skills.

These aspects may create difficulty in accrediting evidence for key/core skills. This is particularly likely to apply to Levels 1 and 2 of the *National Language Standards* where it appears that the level of the target language, length and complexity are below the level required for key/core skills.

As far as the other key/core skills are concerned, the generation of evidence will depend on the specific processes that an individual follows to achieve the outcomes described in the *National Language Standards*. This is the case for example with Information and communication technology where the *National Language Standards* do not require the individual to use IT. However, where the candidate does so in order to achieve the outcomes, activity to generate evidence for the *National Language Standards* can provide suitable evidence for the key/core skills, too. Likewise, the evidence for Application of Number is unlikely to be generated automatically. While the opportunity may arise for individuals to gather or handle numerical information related to their work role, this information will have to be analysed and the results presented to gain evidence for this key or core skill.

Since the units on Working with Others involve essentially oral communication skills, they have been mapped against Speaking and Listening in the *National Language Standards*, and not Reading and Writing. The nature of the evidence required for the key/core skills units of Improving Own Learning and Problem Solving make it unlikely that the achievement of the *National Language Standards* can be used for the accreditation of these key/core skills units.

Key and core skills equivalences

The table below provides an overview of the equivalences between key skills, which are used in England, Wales and Northern Ireland³, and core skills, which are used in Scotland.

² This can be any language as approved by the awarding bodies, for example French, Italian, Arabic or English.

³ Table produced by Scottish Qualifications Authority

Table 1: Equivalences of key and core skills

Key skills	Core skills
Level 3	Higher (SCQF Level 6)
Level 2	Intermediate 2 (SCQF Level 5)
Level 1	Intermediate 1 (SCQF Level 4)
Adult basic skills Entry 3	Access 3 (SCQF Level 3)
Adult basic skills Entry 2	Access 2 (SCQF Level 2)
Adult basic skills Entry 1	There are currently no core skills at SCQF Level 1

The mapping of the National Language Standards and key/core skills

As stated above, the signposting in this table is not intended to be prescriptive but rather it should be seen as a guide to sources of potential evidence.

Listening

L1 Listen to simple language in familiar work contexts

Key skills	Core skills
–	–
–	–

L2 Listen to routine language in everyday work contexts

Key skills	Core skills
–	–
–	–

L3 Listen to varied language in a range of work contexts

Key skills	Core skills
Communication 1	Communication Intermediate 1
Communication 2	Communication Intermediate 2
Working with others 1	Working with others Intermediate 1

L4 Listen to complex language in a wide range of work contexts

Key skills	Core skills
Communication 3	Communication Intermediate Higher
Working with others 2	Working with others Intermediate 2
Working with others 3	Working with others Higher

L5 Listen to complex and specialist language in all work contexts

Key skills	Core skills
Communication 4	–
Working with others 4	–

Speaking

S1 Speak using simple language in familiar work contexts

Key skills	Core skills
Application of number 1	Numeracy Intermediate 1

S2 Speak using routine language in everyday work contexts

Key skills	Core skills
Application of number 1	Numeracy Intermediate 1

S3 Speak using varied language in a range of work contexts

Key skills	Core skills
Communication level 1	Communication Intermediate 1
Communication level 2	Communication Intermediate 2
Application of number 1	Numeracy Intermediate 1
Working with others 1	Working with others Intermediate 1

S4 Speak using complex language in a wide range of work contexts

Key skills	Core skills
Communication level 3	Communication Higher
Application of number 1	Numeracy Intermediate 1
Application of number 2	Numeracy Intermediate 2
Working with others 2	Working with others Intermediate 2
Working with others 3	Working with others Higher

S5 Speak using complex and specialist language in all work contexts

Key skills	Core skills
Communication 4	–
Application of number 1	Numeracy Intermediate 1
Application of number 2	Numeracy Intermediate 2
Working with others 4	–

Reading

R1 Read simple text on familiar work topics

Key skills	Core skills
-	-

R2 Read routine text on everyday work topics

Key skills	Core skills
-	-

R3 Read varied text on a range of work topics

Key skills	Core skills
Communication 1	Communication Intermediate 1
Communication 2	Communication Intermediate 2
Information and communication technology 1	Information technology Intermediate 1

R4 Read complex text on a wide range of work topics

Key skills	Core skills
Communication 3	Communication Intermediate Higher
Information and communication technology 2	Information technology Intermediate 2

R5 Read complex and specialist text on all work topics

Key skills	Core skills
Communication 4	-
Information and communication technology 2	Information technology Intermediate 2

Writing

W1 Write simple text on familiar work topics

Key skills	Core skills
Application of number 1	Numeracy Intermediate 1
Information and communication technology 1	Information technology Intermediate 1

W2 Write routine text on everyday work topics

Key skills	Core skills
Application of number 1	Numeracy Intermediate 1
Information and communication technology 1	Information technology Intermediate 1

W3 Write varied text on a range of work topics

Key skills	Core skills
Communication 1	Communication Intermediate 1
Communication 2	Communication Intermediate 2
Application of number 1	Numeracy Intermediate 1
Information and communication technology 1	Information technology Intermediate 2

W4 Write complex text on a wide range of work topics

Key skills	Core skills
Communication 3	Communication Higher
Application of number 1	Numeracy Intermediate 1
Application of number 2	Numeracy Intermediate 2
Information and communication technology 2	Information technology Intermediate 2

W5 Write complex and specialist text on all work topics

Key skills	Core skills
Communication 4	–
Application of number 1	Numeracy Intermediate 1
Application of number 2	Numeracy Intermediate 2
Information and communication technology 2	Information technology Intermediate 2

**National Language
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General framework



	Level description	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
E	<i>You can understand and use a small number of words and basic key phrases. You can deal with a limited number of familiar work tasks, e.g.:</i> ■ introduce yourself, give your job title; ■ understand basic signs, e.g. entrance, exit; ■ note appointment details, e.g. time, place.	LE Listen to basic words and phrases in familiar work contexts LE.1 Extract information from basic statements LE.2 Follow basic conversations	SE Speak using basic words and phrases in familiar work contexts SE.1 Provide basic personal and work-related information SE.2 Take part in basic conversations	RE Read basic text on familiar work topics RE.1 Extract information from basic signs, instructions and notes	WE Write basic text on familiar work topics WE.1 Complete basic forms and write brief notes
1	<i>You can understand and use a limited range of simple words and sentences. You know simplest forms of the past, present and future tenses. You can deal with familiar work tasks, e.g.:</i> ■ follow/give simple directions, instructions; ■ provide product names, prices, delivery dates; ■ use/respond to common telephone phrases.	L1 Listen to simple language in familiar work contexts L1.1 Extract information from simple statements or descriptions L1.2 Follow simple, predictable conversations	S1 Speak using simple language in familiar work contexts S1.1 Give simple, prepared statements or descriptions S1.2 Take part in simple, predictable conversations	R1 Read simple text on familiar work topics R1.1 Extract information from signs, notices and simple correspondence	W1 Write simple text on familiar work topics W1.1 Complete forms and create simple correspondence
2	<i>You can understand and use routine vocabulary and standard sentence structures and can recognise some less familiar elements. You can deal with everyday work tasks, e.g.:</i> ■ arrange travel, accommodation; ■ understand routine product specifications; ■ write standard letters, e.g. orders.	L2 Listen to routine language in everyday work contexts L2.1 Extract information from routine statements, descriptions or explanations L2.2 Understand routine conversations	S2 Speak using routine language in everyday work contexts S2.1 Give routine descriptions and explanations S2.2 Take part in routine conversations	R2 Read routine text on everyday work topics R2.1 Extract information from routine notices, reports and correspondence	W2 Write routine text on everyday work topics W2.1 Create routine records, reports and correspondence
3	<i>You can understand and express information, ideas and opinions about a variety of subjects. You can deal with a range of work tasks, e.g.:</i> ■ maintain working relationships; ■ undertake straightforward negotiations; ■ provide short reports, proposals.	L3 Listen to varied language in a range of work contexts L3.1 Understand varied accounts, reports and instructions L3.2 Understand varied discussions	S3 Speak using varied language in a range of work contexts S3.1 Give varied accounts, reports and instructions S3.2 Take part in varied discussions	R3 Read varied text on a range of work topics R3.1 Understand varied articles, reports and correspondence	W3 Write varied text on a range of work topics W3.1 Write varied summaries, reports and correspondence
4	<i>You can understand and use complex language and express yourself fluently. You can deal confidently with most work situations, e.g.:</i> ■ initiate and maintain working relationships; ■ undertake complex negotiations; ■ provide complex reports, proposals	L4 Listen to complex language in a wide range of work contexts L4.1 Understand complex presentations or talks L4.2 Understand complex discussions	S4 Speak using complex language in a wide range of work contexts S4.1 Deliver complex, prepared talks S4.2 Take part in complex discussions and meetings	R4 Read complex text on a wide range of work topics R4.1 Understand complex reports, proposals and correspondence	W4 Write complex text on a wide range of work topics W4.1 Write complex reports, proposals and correspondence
5	<i>You can understand and use complex and specialised language. You can deal with all work situations both within and outside your area of professional expertise, e.g.:</i> ■ understand/draft organisational policies; ■ present arguments and contribute to debates; ■ deal with unexpected or controversial issues.	L5 Listen to complex and specialist language in all work contexts L5.1 Understand complex and specialised presentations or talks L5.2 Understand complex and specialised group discussions	S5 Speak using complex and specialist language in all work contexts S5.1 Deliver complex, specialised and unscripted talks S5.2 Take part in complex and specialised group discussions	R5 Read complex and specialist text on all work topics R5.1 Understand complex specialised reports, discussion papers and correspondence	W5 Write complex and specialist text on all work topics W5.1 Write complex and specialised reports, specifications and correspondence

NB The term 'work' is meant to include social activities which are relevant to work e.g. travel, entertaining clients, etc.

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Entry Level



Unit LE Listen to* basic words and phrases in familiar work contexts

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you understand a small number of basic words and key phrases in familiar situations. You can, for example:

- identify basic facts about people and places
- understand short, basic questions about your likes and dislikes
- follow basic directions, delivered slowly and clearly

You can understand standard speech, delivered at slower than normal speed, with no sound or background interference.

Performance criteria

Element LE.1 Extract information from basic statements

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** identify personal or social facts from statements expressed using a limited range of words and key phrases
- 2** identify work-related facts from statements expressed using a limited range of words and key phrases
- 3** understand brief instructions or directions expressed using a limited range of words and key phrases
- 4** understand the main theme of brief, basic statements or descriptions

Element LE.2 Follow basic conversations

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** identify basic key phrases to express greetings, leave-taking, thanks and apologies
- 2** understand basic questions about familiar personal or social matters
- 3** understand basic questions about familiar work-related matters
- 4** understand feelings, needs and preferences expressed using a limited range of words and key phrases
- 5** understand the main theme of brief, basic conversations

**For terms applicable to sign language, replacing terms such as 'listen to', 'speak', 'words', refer to the glossary.*

Range of use

You can listen:

- In work contexts
- In social contexts relevant to work
- Face-to-face (this can include video-conferencing)
- By telephone/videophone/Web cam (this can include recorded messages)

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** understand a limited range of vocabulary in everyday use relevant to the occupational context in which you are using the language
- K2** understand a limited range of set phrases in a fixed form expressing polite conventions (e.g. forms of address, greetings, thanks, leave-taking)
- K3** understand basic numerical data (e.g. numbers, prices)
- K4** understand the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form, where appropriate to the language
- K5** understand simplest ways of expressing the present tense
- K6** understand a limited range of basic sentence structures for making positive and negative statements
- K7** understand a limited range of basic, commonly used positive and negative question forms
- K8** understand basic link words in everyday use, e.g. 'and', 'but'
- K9** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

Unit SE **Speak*** using basic words and phrases in familiar work contexts

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can use a small number of basic words and key phrases in familiar situations. You can, for example:

- greet colleagues or clients
- give your job title and company name
- ask for directions and prices
- express likes and dislikes using a limited range of set phrases

Performance criteria

Element SE.1 Provide basic personal and work-related information

- 1** prepare brief statements or descriptions, which require a limited range of words and key phrases
- 2** use a limited range of words and key phrases to express personal or social facts
- 3** use a limited range of words and key phrases to express work-related facts
- 4** use a limited range of words and key phrases to express feelings, needs and preferences

Element SE.2 Take part in basic conversations

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** use basic key phrases to express greetings, leave-taking, thanks and apologies
- 2** use basic questions and responses to exchange information about familiar personal or social matters
- 3** use basic questions and responses to exchange information about familiar work-related matters
- 4** use a limited range of words and key phrases to express feelings, needs and preferences

**For terms applicable to sign language, replacing terms such as 'listen to', 'speak', 'words', refer to the glossary.*

Range of use

You can speak:

- In work contexts
- In social contexts relevant to work
- Face-to-face (this can include video-conferencing)
- By telephone/videophone/Web cam

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** use a limited range of vocabulary in everyday use relevant to the occupational context in which you are using the language
- K2** use a limited range of set phrases in a fixed form expressing polite conventions (e.g. forms of address, greetings, thanks, leave-taking)
- K3** use basic numerical data (e.g. numbers, prices)
- K4** use the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form, where appropriate to the language
- K5** use simplest ways of expressing the present tense
- K6** use a limited range of basic sentence structures for making positive and negative statements
- K7** use a limited range of basic, commonly used positive and negative question forms
- K8** use basic link words in everyday use, e.g. 'and', 'but'
- K9** pronounce the language clearly enough that a sympathetic native speaker would understand without undue difficulty
- K10** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

Unit RE Read basic text on familiar work topics

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you understand a small number of basic words and key phrases on familiar subjects. You can, for example:

- pick out basic information about people and places
- recognise basic written signs, e.g. road signs or safety warnings
- understand basic instructions, e.g. on use of an automatic ticket machine
- follow basic directions, e.g. how to reach a destination by public transport

Performance criteria

Element RE.1 Extract information from basic signs, instructions and notes

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** identify personal or social facts from text consisting of a limited range of words and key phrases
- 2** identify work-related facts from text consisting of a limited range of words and key phrases
- 3** understand questions or requests expressed using a limited range of words and key phrases
- 4** understand brief instructions or directions expressed using a limited range of words and key phrases
- 5** understand feelings, needs and preferences expressed using a limited range of words and key phrases
- 6** understand the main theme of brief, basic text

Range of use

You read:

- Text relating to work
- Text relating to relevant social activities
- Signs
- Instructions or directions
- Correspondence

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** understand a limited range of vocabulary in everyday use relevant to the occupational context in which you are using the language
- K2** understand a limited range of set phrases in a fixed form expressing polite conventions (e.g. forms of address, greetings, thanks, leave-taking)
- K3** understand basic numerical data (e.g. numbers, prices)
- K4** understand the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form, where appropriate to the language
- K5** understand simplest ways of expressing the present tense
- K6** understand a limited range of basic sentence structures for making positive and negative statements
- K7** understand a limited range of basic, commonly used positive and negative question forms
- K8** understand basic link words in everyday use, e.g. 'and', 'but'
- K9** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

Unit WE Write basic text on familiar topics

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can write basic, short phrases and sentences on familiar topics. You can, for example:

- fill in basic forms, e.g. hotel registration or car hire
- write brief notes, e.g. to state the time and place of a meeting
- write basic e-mails, e.g. to request the price of a product
- Your spelling is accurate enough that a native reader can understand.

Performance criteria

Element WE.1 Complete basic forms and write brief notes

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** use a limited range of words and key phrases to convey familiar personal or social facts
- 2** use a limited range of words and key phrases to convey familiar work-related facts
- 3** use a limited range of words and key phrases to ask for information or make requests
- 4** use a limited range of words and key phrases to set out meeting arrangements
- 5** use a limited range of words and key phrases to express feelings, needs and preferences

Range of use

You can write:

- Text relating to work
- Text relating to relevant social activities
- Notes, messages or e-mails
- To complete forms

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** use a limited range of vocabulary in everyday use relevant to the occupational context in which you are using the language
- K2** use a limited range of set phrases in a fixed form expressing polite conventions (e.g. forms of address, greetings, thanks, leave-taking)
- K3** use basic numerical data (e.g. numbers, prices)
- K4** use the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form, where appropriate to the language
- K5** use simplest ways of expressing the present tense
- K6** use a limited range of basic sentence structures for making positive and negative statements
- K7** use a limited range of basic, commonly used positive and negative question forms
- K8** use basic link words in everyday use, e.g. 'and', 'but'
- K10** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

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Level 1



Unit L1 Listen to* simple language in familiar work contexts

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you understand a limited range of simple words and sentences in familiar situations. You can, for example:

- identify simple facts about people, objects and organisations
- understand simple questions about your own and others' work roles and responsibilities
- cope with basic work-related and social situations, e.g. at a hotel reception desk or shopping

You can understand standard speech, delivered at a normal or slower than normal speed, with little or no sound or background interference.

Performance criteria

Element L1.1 Extract information from simple statements or descriptions

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** identify personal or social facts from statements or descriptions consisting of simple, set phrases
- 2** identify work-related facts from statements or descriptions consisting of simple, set phrases
- 3** understand instructions and directions expressed using simple, set phrases
- 4** understand the main points of simple statements or descriptions

Element L1.2 Follow simple, predictable conversations

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** understand simply expressed questions and responses about familiar personal or social matters
- 2** understand simply expressed questions and responses about familiar work-related matters
- 3** understand requests expressed using simple, set phrases
- 4** understand feelings, needs and preferences expressed using simple, set phrases
- 5** understand the main points of simple conversations

**For terms applicable to sign language, replacing terms such as 'listen to', 'speak', 'words', refer to the glossary.*

Range of use

You can listen:

- In work contexts
- In social contexts relevant to work
- Face-to-face (this can include video-conferencing)
- By telephone/videophone/Web cam (this can include recorded messages)

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** understand vocabulary in everyday use relevant to the occupational context in which you are using the language
- K2** understand set phrases in a fixed form expressing polite conventions (e.g. forms of address, greetings, thanks, leave-taking)
- K3** understand simple numerical data (e.g. numbers, prices, dates)
- K4** understand the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form, where appropriate to the language
- K5** understand simplest ways of expressing past, present and future tenses, where appropriate to the language, which you encounter regularly in your work
- K6** understand simple sentence structures for making positive and negative statements
- K7** understand simple, commonly used positive and negative question forms
- K8** understand simple, commonly used imperative forms for giving orders or instructions
- K9** understand simple link words in everyday use
- K10** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

Unit S1 **Speak*** using simple language in familiar work contexts

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can use a limited range of simple words and sentences in familiar situations. You can, for example:

- simply describe your own and others' roles and responsibilities
- provide standard work-related information, e.g. products, services, orders, quantities
- handle simple exchanges, e.g. at a hotel reception desk or a shop counter
- express everyday emotions and preferences, using a limited range of set phrases

When you are using familiar vocabulary and set phrases, your language is generally accurate. In less predictable contexts, you may make some grammatical errors, but these do not prevent the listener from understanding your meaning.

Performance criteria

Element S1.1 Give simple, prepared statements or descriptions

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** use simple, set phrases to express personal or social facts
- 2** use simple, set phrases to express work-related facts
- 3** use simple, set phrases to express feelings, needs and preferences
- 4** use spoken conventions appropriate to the context

Element S1.2 Take part in simple, predictable conversations

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** use simple questions and responses to exchange information about familiar personal or social matters
- 2** use simple questions and responses to exchange information about familiar work-related matters
- 3** use simple, set phrases to express feelings, needs and preferences
- 4** use simple, set phrases to make requests and/or clarify understanding
- 5** use spoken conventions appropriate to the context

**For terms applicable to sign language, replacing terms such as 'listen to', 'speak', 'words', refer to the glossary.*

Range of use

You can speak:

- In work contexts
- In social contexts relevant to work
- Face-to-face (this can include video-conferencing)
- By telephone/videophone/Web cam

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** use vocabulary in everyday use relevant to the occupational context in which you are using the language
- K2** use set phrases in a fixed form expressing polite conventions (e.g. forms of address, greetings, thanks, leave-taking)
- K3** use simple numerical data (e.g. numbers, prices, dates)
- K4** use the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form, where appropriate to the language
- K5** use simplest ways of expressing past, present and future tenses, where appropriate to the language, which you encounter regularly in your work
- K6** use simple sentence structures for making positive and negative statements
- K7** use simple, commonly used positive and negative question forms
- K8** use simple, commonly used imperative forms for giving orders or instructions
- K9** use simple link words in everyday use
- K10** pronounce the language clearly, so that a sympathetic native speaker would easily understand
- K11** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

Unit R1 Read simple text on familiar work topics

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you understand simply written text on familiar subjects. You can, for example:

- recognise vocabulary and phrases which describe familiar objects, e.g. equipment
- understand simple, common public notices
- identify the gist of simple articles, tourist or promotional material
- understand simple instructions, e.g. arrival and departure times, destinations

Performance criteria

Element R1.1 Extract information from signs, notices and simple correspondence

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** identify personal or social facts from text consisting of simple, set phrases
- 2** identify work-related facts from text consisting of simple, set phrases
- 3** understand simply expressed questions or requests
- 4** understand instructions or directions expressed using simple, set phrases
- 5** understand feelings, needs and preferences expressed using simple, set phrases
- 6** understand the main points of simple text

Range of use

You can read:

- Text relating to work
- Text relating to relevant social activities
- Signs or notices
- Descriptive or promotional materials
- Correspondence

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** understand vocabulary in everyday use relevant to the occupational context in which you are using the language
- K2** understand set phrases in a fixed form expressing polite conventions (e.g. forms of address, greetings, thanks, leave-taking)
- K3** understand simple numerical data (e.g. numbers, prices, dates)
- K4** understand the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form, where appropriate to the language
- K5** understand simplest ways of expressing past, present and future tenses, where appropriate to the language, which you encounter regularly in your work
- K6** understand simple sentence structures for making positive and negative statements
- K7** understand simple, commonly used positive and negative question forms
- K8** understand simple, commonly used imperative forms for giving orders or instructions
- K9** understand simple link words in everyday use
- K10** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

Unit W1 Write simple text on familiar topics

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can write simple text to carry out familiar tasks. You can, for example:

- fill in simple questionnaires
- describe simply the key characteristics of products, services and organisations
- write simple messages to colleagues
- write simple faxes and e-mails, e.g. to book hotel accommodation

You can use a small number of memorised sentences, words and set phrases to create and adapt simple texts. When using familiar sentence structures and individual vocabulary items, e.g. in forms and lists, your writing is generally accurate. When creating simple text, you may make some errors, but these do not impair understanding.

Performance criteria

Element W1.1 Complete forms and create simple correspondence

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** use simple, set phrases to express familiar personal or social facts
- 2** use simple, set phrases to express familiar work-related facts
- 3** use simple, set phrases to ask for information or make requests
- 4** use simple, set phrases to provide instructions or directions
- 5** use simple, set phrases to express feelings, needs and preferences
- 6** use written conventions appropriate to the context

Range of use

You can write:

- Text relating to work
- Text relating to relevant social activities
- To complete forms
- Correspondence

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** use vocabulary in everyday use relevant to the occupational context in which you are using the language
- K2** use set phrases in a fixed form expressing polite conventions (e.g. forms of address, greetings, thanks, leave-taking)
- K3** use simple numerical data (e.g. numbers, prices, dates)
- K4** use the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form, where appropriate to the language
- K5** use simplest ways of expressing past, present and future tenses, where appropriate to the language, which you encounter regularly in your work
- K6** use simple sentence structures for making positive and negative statements
- K7** use simple, commonly used positive and negative question forms
- K8** use simple, commonly used imperative forms for giving orders or instructions
- K9** use simple link words in everyday use
- K10** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

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Level 2



Unit L2 Listen to* routine language in everyday work contexts

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you understand routine language in everyday situations. You can, for example:

- handle routine exchanges of information about your area of work
- understand step-by-step instructions
- understand straightforward advice about everyday work matters
- follow straightforward directions

You can understand specific details from, and the general meaning of, a range of passages. You can understand standard speech, delivered at normal speed, with routine levels of sound or background interference.

Performance criteria

Element L2.1

Extract information from routine statements, descriptions or explanations

When competent at this level you can:

- 1 select specific personal or social details from descriptions or explanations, which combine simple structures and set phrases
- 2 select specific work-related details from routine statements or descriptions, which combine simple structures and set phrases
- 3 understand instructions or advice expressed through combinations of simple structures and set phrases
- 4 understand the main points of routine statements, explanations or descriptions

Element L2.2 Understand routine conversations

When competent at this level you can:

- 1 understand routine questions and responses about everyday personal or social topics
- 2 understand routine questions and responses about everyday work-related topics
- 3 understand requests expressed through combinations of simple structures and set phrases
- 4 understand views expressed through combinations of simple structures and set phrases
- 5 understand the main points of routine conversations

**For terms applicable to sign language, replacing terms such as 'listen to', 'speak', 'words', refer to the glossary.*

Range of use

You can listen:

- In work contexts
- In social contexts relevant to work
- Face-to-face (this can include video-conferencing)
- By telephone/videophone/Web cam (this can include recorded messages)
- To public announcements/standard broadcasts

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** understand vocabulary in everyday use relevant to the occupational context in which you are using the language, and some common alternatives
- K2** understand set phrases in a fixed form expressing polite conventions (e.g. forms of address, greeting, leave-taking) and feelings (e.g. gratitude, regret, apology, annoyance)
- K3** understand routine numerical data (e.g. quantity, prices, dates)
- K4** understand the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form and the use of this with other verbs, where appropriate to the language
- K5** understand simple ways of expressing past, present and future tenses, where appropriate to the language
- K6** understand sentence structures for making positive and negative statements
- K7** understand commonly used positive and negative question forms
- K8** understand the imperative form
- K9** understand commonly used conditional forms, where appropriate to the language
- K10** understand a range of link words in everyday use, e.g. 'because', 'however'
- K11** understand compound sentences (e.g. 'This is the room (that) I booked.')
- K12** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

Unit S2 **Speak*** using routine language in everyday work contexts

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can use routine language in everyday situations. You can, for example:

- give brief descriptions of work or personal circumstances
- provide information about products and systems
- exchange routine advice about your area of work
- give short reports on everyday problems or complaints

Your language is generally accurate and you make only minor grammatical errors, which do not obscure your meaning. If you do not have the vocabulary, or the other person does not understand, you find alternative ways of expressing information.

Performance criteria

Element S2.1 Give routine descriptions or explanations

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** use and combine simple structures and set phrases to provide personal or social information
- 2** use and combine simple structures and set phrases to provide work-related information
- 3** use and combine simple structures and set phrases to provide instructions or advice
- 4** use spoken conventions appropriate to the context

Element S2.2 Take part in routine conversations

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** use and combine simple structures and common expressions to initiate and maintain contact with others
- 2** use routine questions and responses to exchange information about everyday personal or social matters
- 3** use routine questions and responses to exchange information about everyday work-related matters
- 4** use and combine simple structures and set phrases to make requests and/or clarify understanding
- 5** use and combine simple structures and set phrases to express views
- 6** use spoken conventions appropriate to the context

**For terms applicable to sign language, replacing terms such as 'listen to', 'speak', 'words', refer to the glossary.*

Range of use

You can speak:

- In work contexts
- In social contexts relevant to work
- Face-to-face (this can include video-conferencing)
- By telephone/videophone

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** use vocabulary in everyday use relevant to the occupational context in which you are using the language, and some common alternatives
- K2** use set phrases in a fixed form expressing polite conventions (e.g. forms of address, greeting, leave-taking) and feelings (e.g. gratitude, regret, apology, annoyance)
- K3** use routine numerical data (e.g. quantity, prices, dates)
- K4** use the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form with other verbs, where appropriate to the language
- K5** use simple ways of expressing past, present and future tenses, where appropriate to the language
- K6** use sentence structures for making positive and negative statements
- K7** use commonly used positive and negative question forms
- K8** use the imperative form
- K9** use commonly used conditional forms, where appropriate to the language
- K10** use a range of link words in everyday use, e.g. 'because', 'however'
- K11** use compound sentences (e.g. 'This is the room (that) I booked.')
- K12** use appropriate intonation and pronunciation to express meaning clearly
- K13** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

Unit R2 Read routine text on everyday work topics

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you understand a range of routine materials on everyday matters. You can, for example:

- understand routine letters, e-mails and faxes relating to your area of work
- understand the broad outline of announcements, e.g. job vacancies, advertisements
- understand straightforward safety regulations
- pick out relevant details and grasp the gist of articles and reports on everyday topics

Performance criteria

Element R2.1

Extract information from routine notices, reports and correspondence

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** extract factual information written using simple structures and set phrases
- 2** understand enquiries or requests written using simple structures and set phrases
- 3** understand instructions or advice written using simple structures and set phrases
- 4** understand views expressed using simple structures and set phrases
- 5** scan routine text to extract relevant details
- 6** understand the main points of routine text

Range of use

You can read:

- Text relating to work
- Text relating to relevant social activities
- Signs or notices
- Articles or reports
- Correspondence

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** understand vocabulary in everyday use relevant to the occupational context in which you are using the language, and some common alternatives
- K2** understand set phrases in a fixed form expressing polite conventions (e.g. forms of address, greeting, leave-taking) and feelings (e.g. gratitude, regret, apology, annoyance)
- K3** understand routine numerical data (e.g. quantity, prices, dates)
- K4** understand the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form and the use of this with other verbs, where appropriate to the language
- K5** understand simple ways of expressing past, present and future tenses, where appropriate to the language
- K7** understand sentence structures for making positive and negative statements
- K8** understand commonly used positive and negative question forms
- K9** understand the imperative form
- K10** understand commonly used conditional forms, where appropriate to the language
- K11** understand a range of link words in everyday use, e.g. 'because', 'therefore'
- K12** understand compound sentences (e.g. 'This is the room (that) I booked.')
- K13** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

Unit W2 Write routine text on everyday work topics

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can produce routine text to carry out everyday tasks. You can, for example:

- create plans for routine activities, e.g. lists of tasks and deadlines
- produce simple, step-by-step instructions
- describe the key characteristics of products or services in your area of work
- create standard letters, faxes and e-mails, e.g. to enquire about availability or make orders

You can produce continuous short texts, combining mainly set phrases and familiar language. When writing formal text, you write accurately but with the support of standard models (e.g. templates) and reference material as necessary. When writing informal text, e.g. messages, you may make some grammar and spelling errors but these do not impair understanding.

Performance criteria

Element W2.1 Create routine records, reports and correspondence

When competent at this level you can:

- K1** use and combine simple structures and set phrases to record routine information
- K2** use and combine simple structures and set phrases to make enquiries or requests
- K3** use and combine simple structures and set phrases to write instructions or advice
- K4** use and combine simple structures and set phrases to express views
- K5** use written conventions appropriate to the context

Range of use

You can write:

- Text relating to work
- Text relating to relevant social activities
- To compile records
- To complete structured, fixed format reports
- Formal correspondence
- Informal correspondence

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** use vocabulary in everyday use relevant to the occupational context in which you are using the language, and some common alternatives
- K2** use set phrases in a fixed form expressing polite conventions (e.g. forms of address, greeting, leave-taking) and feelings (e.g. gratitude, regret, apology, annoyance)
- K3** use routine numerical data (e.g. quantity, prices, dates)
- K4** use the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form with other verbs, where appropriate to the language
- K5** use simple ways of expressing past, present and future tenses, where appropriate to the language
- K6** use sentence structures for making positive and negative statements
- K7** use commonly used positive and negative question forms
- K8** use the imperative form
- K9** use commonly used conditional forms, where appropriate to the language
- K10** use a range of link words in everyday use, e.g. 'because', 'therefore'
- K11** use compound sentences (e.g. 'This is the room (that) I booked.')
- K12** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

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Level 3



Unit L3 Listen to* varied language in a range of work contexts

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can understand information, ideas and opinions expressed in a range of work-related and relevant social contexts. You can, for example:

- understand issues and concerns relating to your area of work
- follow uncomplicated negotiations
- understand the main points and relevant details of news items, interviews and documentaries
- understand most social conversation provided there are common interests

You can extract specific details and grasp the overall meaning of a range of extended passages spoken at normal speed and in normally used social and work registers.

Performance criteria

Element L3.1 Understand varied accounts, reports and instructions

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** extract factual information from accounts or reports delivered using a variety of expressions and sentence structures
- 2** understand instructions or advice delivered using a variety of expressions and sentence structures
- 3** identify opinions delivered using varied expressions and sentence structures, and distinguish them from other information
- 4** select relevant details from varied accounts or reports
- 5** understand the main points of varied accounts or reports

Element L3.2 Understand varied discussions

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** extract factual information from discussions in which speakers use a variety of expressions and sentence structures
- 2** identify opinions, delivered using varied expressions and sentence structures, and distinguish them from other information
- 3** understand requests and enquiries, delivered using varied expressions and sentence structures
- 4** extract relevant details from varied discussions
- 5** understand the main points of varied discussions

**For terms applicable to sign language, replacing terms such as 'listen to', 'speak', 'words', refer to the glossary.*

Range of use

You can listen:

- In work contexts
- In social contexts relevant to work
- Face-to-face (this can include video-conferencing)
- By telephone/videophone/Web cam (this can include recorded messages)
- To standard broadcast items
- In formal settings
- In informal settings

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** understand a wide variety of work-related and social vocabulary
- K2** understand a range of polite forms of address, greeting and leave-taking and expressions of gratitude, regret, apology, annoyance
- K3** understand some less commonly used, technical terms relevant to your area of work
- K4** understand numerical data
- K5** understand a range of structures using the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form, where appropriate to the language
- K6** understand the present, past, future and conditional aspects, where appropriate to the language
- K7** understand commonly used sentence structures in their positive, negative, imperative and interrogative forms
- K8** understand a range of complex sentence combinations, of which some are rehearsed models
- K9** understand a wide range of linking language, e.g. 'although', 'provided that...'
- K10** understand alternative terms and structures which modify register for different audiences and contexts
- K11** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

Unit S3 **Speak*** using varied language in a range of work contexts

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can express information, ideas and opinions in a range of work-related and relevant social contexts. You can, for example:

- present information informally
- maintain a business relationship
- exchange information and advice to solve work-related problems
- manage uncomplicated negotiations

You have a good command of vocabulary and can use and adapt grammatical structures as appropriate. When you speak using essential grammar, you make very few mistakes, but you may make more errors when attempting to use more complex structures. If you do not have the vocabulary, or the other person does not understand, you find alternative, correct ways of expressing information.

Performance criteria

Element S3.1 Give varied accounts, reports and instructions

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** use a variety of expressions and sentence structures to provide information
- 2** use a variety of expressions and sentence structures to provide instructions or advice
- 3** use a variety of expressions and sentence structures to express opinions
- 4** modify language and register as appropriate to the context and your relationship with others

Element S3.2 Take part in varied discussions

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** use a variety of expressions and sentence structures to contribute to discussions
- 2** use a variety of expressions and sentence structures to exchange information
- 3** use a variety of expressions and sentence structures to make requests or enquiries
- 4** use a variety of expressions and sentence structures to exchange opinions
- 5** modify language and register as appropriate to the context and your relationship with others

**For terms applicable to sign language, replacing terms such as 'listen to', 'speak', 'words', refer to the glossary.*

Range of use

You can speak:

- In work contexts
- In social contexts relevant to work
- Face-to-face (this can include video-conferencing)
- By telephone/videophone/Web cam
- In formal settings
- In informal settings

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** use a wide variety of work-related and social vocabulary
- K2** use a range of polite forms of address, greeting and leave-taking and expressions of gratitude, regret, apology, annoyance
- K3** use some less commonly used, technical terms relevant to your area of work
- K4** use numerical data
- K5** use a range of structures using the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form, where appropriate to the language
- K6** use the present, past, future and conditional aspects, where appropriate to the language
- K7** use commonly used sentence structures in their positive, negative, imperative and interrogative forms
- K8** use a range of complex sentence combinations, of which some are rehearsed models
- K9** use a wide range of linking language, e.g. 'although', 'provided that...'
- K10** use alternative terms and structures which modify register for different audiences and contexts
- K11** use appropriate intonation and emphasis
- K12** pronounce the language clearly
- K13** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

Unit R3 Read varied text on a range of work topics

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you understand varied text on a range of work-related and relevant social matters. You can, for example:

- deal with non-routine letters within your area of work
- compare information about products and services within your area of work
- understand technical specifications for products and services within your area of work
- understand newspaper articles relating to general matters

You can handle a range of materials, in a variety of formats and registers. You can scan texts for required details and bring together information, ideas and opinions in order to understand their overall meaning.

Performance criteria

Element R3.1 Understand varied articles, reports and correspondence

When competent at this level you can:

- 1 understand factual information conveyed using a variety of expressions and sentence structures
- 2 understand enquiries or requests written using a variety of expressions and sentence structures
- 3 understand instructions or advice written using a variety of expressions and sentence structures
- 4 scan varied text to extract all relevant details
- 5 understand the overall meaning of varied text
- 6 distinguish between information, ideas and opinions expressed

Range of use

You can read:

- In work contexts
- In social contexts relevant to work
- Signs or notices
- Articles or reports
- Correspondence

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** understand a wide variety of work-related and social vocabulary
- K2** understand a range of polite forms of address, greeting and leave-taking and expressions of gratitude, regret, apology, annoyance
- K3** understand some less commonly used, technical terms relevant to your area of work
- K4** understand numerical data
- K5** understand a range of structures using the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form, where appropriate to the language
- K6** understand the present, past, future and conditional aspects, where appropriate to the language
- K7** understand commonly used sentence structures in their positive, negative, imperative and interrogative forms
- K8** understand a range of complex sentence combinations, of which some are rehearsed models
- K9** understand a wide range of linking language, e.g. 'although', 'provided that...'
- K10** understand alternative terms and structures which modify register for different audiences and contexts
- K11** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

Unit W3 Write varied text on a range of work topics

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can produce varied text to carry out a range of work-related and relevant social tasks. You can, for example:

- produce a range of business correspondence
- structure and produce reports, expressing both facts and opinions
- produce operating instructions for familiar pieces of equipment

You can produce text of varying lengths and adapt your style of writing as appropriate to the subject and readers. Your formal writing is for the most part technically accurate. Any errors you make do not interfere with the reader's overall understanding.

Performance criteria

Element W3.1 Write varied summaries, reports and correspondence

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** use a variety of expressions and sentence structures to provide factual information
- 2** use a variety of expressions and sentence structures to give instructions or advice
- 3** use a variety of expressions and sentence structures to make enquiries
- 4** use a variety of expressions and sentence structures to express opinions
- 5** modify language and register as appropriate to the context and your relationship with the readers

Range of use

You can write:

- Text relating to work
- Text relating to relevant social activities
- Summaries, accounts or reports
- Correspondence
- In formal formats
- In informal formats

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** use a wide variety of work-related and social vocabulary
- K2** use a range of polite forms of address, greeting and leave-taking and expressions of gratitude, regret, apology, annoyance
- K3** use some less commonly used, technical terms relevant to your area of work
- K4** use numerical data
- K5** use a range of structures using the infinitive (or other basic verb root) form, where appropriate to the language
- K6** use the present, past, future and conditional aspects, where appropriate to the language
- K7** use commonly used sentence structures in their positive, negative, imperative and interrogative forms
- K8** use a range of complex sentence combinations, of which some are rehearsed models
- K9** use a wide range of linking language, e.g. 'although', 'provided that...'
- K10** use alternative terms and structures which modify register for different audiences and contexts
- K11** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

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Level 4



Unit L4 Listen to* complex language in a wide range of work contexts

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can handle all aspects of everyday work, except where these are outside your own area of expertise. You have the language skills to operate independently and at a professional level in the target language. You can, for example:

- follow discussions and debates
- understand all complaints and problems within your area of work
- participate in negotiations relating to your area of work
- handle a wide range of social interactions in formal and informal settings

You can extract complex information from a wide range of sources, spoken at normal speed. You can handle a range of familiar accents, formal and informal language (including technical vocabulary) and colloquialisms.

Performance criteria

Element L4.1 Understand complex presentations or talks

When competent at this level you can:

- 1 extract all relevant information from presentations or talks, expressed in complex language
- 2 follow arguments and lines of reasoning expressed in complex language
- 3 understand questions and responses related to presentations
- 4 identify information about the urgency and priority of requirements
- 5 identify opinions and values expressed in complex language and distinguish them from other information

Element L4.2 Understand complex discussions

When competent at this level you can:

- 1 extract all relevant information from discussions in which speakers use complex language
- 2 follow arguments and lines of reasoning expressed in complex language
- 3 understand questions, comments and responses expressed in complex language
- 4 identify opinions and values expressed in complex language and distinguish them from other information
- 5 identify any apparent ambiguities in what is said

**For terms applicable to sign language, replacing terms such as 'listen to', 'speak', 'words', refer to the glossary.*

Range of use

You can listen:

- In work contexts
- In social contexts relevant to work
- Face-to-face (this can include video-conferencing)
- By telephone/videophone (this can include recorded messages)
- To standard broadcast items
- In formal settings
- In informal settings

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** understand vocabulary to deal with most matters within your area of work, including colloquialisms used in business and social contexts
- K2** understand a wide range of less commonly-used technical terms relevant to your area of work
- K3** understand all tenses, aspects and moods of verbs
- K4** understand all sentence structures, except the most complex or obscure
- K5** understand a wide range of alternative terms and structures which express standard, colloquial, formal and informal registers
- K6** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

Unit S4 Speak* using complex language in a wide range of work contexts

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can handle all aspects of everyday work, except where these are outside your own area of expertise. You have the language skills to operate independently and at a professional level in the target language. You can, for example:

- make complex presentations and clarify any technical issues which may arise
- negotiate in formal meetings, for example, to reach decisions or solve problems
- initiate, stimulate and maintain conversations on a wide variety of topics

You can use a wide variety of idioms and expressions, and technical language relevant to your area of work. You speak fluently over an extended period of time and can handle most complex language structures. When you use less common expressions or operate outside your area of expertise, you may make minor errors but you can find alternative ways of expressing unfamiliar technical terms.

Performance criteria

Element S4.1 Deliver complex, prepared talks

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** prepare talks which require use of complex language and are appropriate to the subject matter and context
- 2** use complex language to present facts, ideas and opinions
- 3** use complex language to set out supporting arguments
- 4** respond to questions or comments from the audience
- 5** use register, technical language and idiom as appropriate to the subject matter, context and your relationship with others
- 6** produce fluent, sustained speech

Element S4.2 Take part in complex discussions and meetings

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** use complex language to contribute spontaneously to discussions
- 2** use complex language to exchange facts, ideas and opinions
- 3** use complex language to produce and respond to questions, comments and arguments
- 4** clarify own understanding or confirm others' understanding, e.g. of specialised terms
- 5** use register, technical language and idiom as appropriate to the subject matter, context and your relationship with others
- 6** interact using fluent, sustained speech

**For terms applicable to sign language, replacing terms such as 'listen to', 'speak', 'words', refer to the glossary.*

Range of use

You can speak:

- In work contexts
- In social contexts relevant to work
- Face-to-face (this can include video-conferencing)
- By telephone/videophone/Web cam
- In informal settings
- In formal settings

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** use vocabulary to deal with most matters within your area of work, including colloquialisms used in business and social contexts
- K2** use a wide range of less commonly-used technical terms relevant to your area of work
- K3** use all tenses, aspects and moods of verbs
- K4** use all sentence structures, except the most complex or obscure
- K5** use a wide range of alternative terms and structures which express standard, colloquial, formal and informal registers
- K6** use pronunciation close to that of a native speaker
- K7** use intonation appropriate to the meaning and nuance you intend to convey
- K8** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

Unit R4 Read complex text on a wide range of work topics

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can handle all aspects of everyday work, except where these are outside your own area of expertise. You have the language skills to operate independently and at a professional level in the target language. You can, for example:

- understand articles on subjects within your area of work
- follow technical specifications for goods, services or systems within your area of work
- understand performance evaluations relevant to your area of work
- handle complaints or problems relating to your area of work

You can understand a wide range of materials, including documents which are complex or technical, within your area of expertise. You can scan complex texts rapidly to find relevant information. You may occasionally miss nuances but can normally draw out inferences from text containing implicit messages or opinions.

Performance criteria

Element R4.1 Understand complex reports, proposals and correspondence

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** extract all relevant information from complex text
- 2** skim complex text to grasp the overall meaning
- 3** scan complex text to extract specific details
- 4** identify opinions and values and distinguish them from other information expressed
- 5** identify information about the urgency and priority of requirements
- 6** identify social references and the level of formality of the text and their implications for an accurate reading of the text
- 7** handle extended passages of text

Range of use

You can read:

- Text relating to your area of work
- Text relating to relevant social activities
- Articles, reports or proposals
- Manuals or training materials
- Formal correspondence
- Informal correspondence

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** understand vocabulary to deal with most matters within your area of work, including colloquialisms used in business and social contexts
- K2** understand a wide range of less commonly-used technical terms relevant to your area of work
- K3** understand all tenses, aspects and moods of verbs
- K4** understand all sentence structures, except the most complex or obscure
- K5** understand a wide range of alternative terms and structures which express standard, colloquial, formal and informal registers
- K6** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

Unit W4 Write complex text on a wide range of work topics

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can handle all aspects of everyday work, except where these are outside your own area of expertise. You have the language skills to operate independently and at a professional level in the target language. You can, for example:

- draft organisational plans or strategies
- write evaluations of individual or team performance
- provide product information, complex advice or instructions within your area of work
- exchange complex business correspondence

You can express views, opinions and arguments on a range of topics. You can write accurately and appropriately for different audiences. You may occasionally miss nuances but the reader will easily understand your overall meaning.

Performance criteria

Element W4.1 Write complex reports, proposals and correspondence

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** use complex language to present factual information
- 2** use complex language to express ideas and opinions
- 3** use complex language to set out supporting arguments
- 4** select vocabulary, styles and structures to express meaning clearly and succinctly
- 5** adapt and use idiom and register as appropriate to the subject matter, context and your relationship with readers
- 6** produce extended passages of text

Range of use

You can write:

- Text relating to your area of work
- Text relating to relevant social activities
- Articles, reports or specifications
- Proposals or plans
- Formal correspondence
- Informal correspondence

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** use vocabulary to deal with most matters within your area of work, including colloquialisms used in business and social contexts
- K2** use a wide range of less commonly-used technical terms relevant to your area of work
- K3** use all tenses, aspects and moods of verbs
- K4** use all sentence structures, except the most complex or obscure
- K5** use a wide range of alternative terms and structures which express standard, colloquial, formal and informal registers
- K6** use reference sources (e.g. glossaries, dictionaries) to clarify and confirm meaning as necessary

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Level 5



Unit L5 Listen to* complex and specialist language in all work contexts

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can handle all complex language tasks in professional environments, including those involving technical or specialist language relevant to your area of work. You have the language skills to operate permanently in the target language. You can, for example:

- follow discussions and debates related to high-level strategy or policy
- appreciate undercurrents and attitudes
- handle all social interactions in formal and informal settings

You can understand any kind of speech, delivered at normal or faster than normal speed. You can handle all familiar accents and colloquialisms, with the exception of extreme local variants of the standard language.

Performance criteria

Element L5.1 Understand complex and specialised presentations or talks

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** understand in full information, ideas and theories expressed in presentations or talks using complex and specialist language
- 2** understand questions and comments from the audience
- 3** identify and evaluate the intention of language and nuance in the selection of language
- 4** identify any apparent ambiguities
- 5** consistently handle large amounts of information conveyed in extended, complex and specialised presentations or talks

Element L5.2 Understand complex and specialised group discussions

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** understand in full information, ideas and theories expressed in group discussions using complex and specialist language
- 2** identify the content, tone, significance and apparent implied meanings, expressed using complex and specialised language
- 3** identify and evaluate the intention of language and nuance in the selection of language
- 4** identify similarities and differences between what different contributors say and the implications for the interaction
- 5** identify any apparent ambiguities
- 6** handle multiple and prolonged interactions

**For terms applicable to sign language, replacing terms such as 'listen to', 'speak', 'words', refer to the glossary.*

Range of use

You can listen:

- In work contexts
- In social contexts relevant to work
- Face-to-face (this can include video-conferencing)
- By telephone/videophone/Web cam (this can include recorded messages)
- To broadcast items
- In formal settings
- In informal settings

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** understand vocabulary to deal with all matters within your area of expertise, and other matters as they become necessary in the course of your work
- K2** understand current colloquialisms used in business and social contexts
- K3** understand regional dialects, features from the language spoken in other countries (e.g. Zaire for French) and accents, which would reasonably be expected of a native speaker of the standard form of the language
- K4** understand an extensive range of idioms and expressions, to convey nuance as appropriate to the context
- K5** understand all grammatical forms (morphology) and sentence structures (syntax), except rare or archaic forms and structures
- K6** understand a wide range of appropriate discourse markers, to refer forwards and back to significant points in the course of communication
- K7** understand a choice of vocabulary and structures which express standard, colloquial, formal and informal registers
- K8** use specialist reference sources (e.g. advanced grammar manuals) as necessary

Unit S5 Speak* using complex and specialist language in all work contexts

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can handle all complex language tasks in professional environments, including those involving technical and specialist language relevant to your area of work. You have the skills to operate in all situations in the target language. You can, for example:

- take the lead in formal meetings
- negotiate operational plans
- articulately argue a case to a successful conclusion

You use language and idiom confidently, without making errors, and can easily adapt the degree of formality to the context. You speak comfortably and spontaneously, with fluency and accuracy.

Performance criteria

Element S5.1 Deliver complex, specialised and unscripted talks

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** prepare material for unscripted talks, which require use of complex and specialist language, and are appropriate to the needs of the audience and the subject matter
- 2** use a full range of language, including complex and specialist language, to present specialised information or advice
- 3** use a full range of language, including complex and specialist language, to present arguments or theories
- 4** express complex points succinctly and without ambiguity (unless this is intentional)
- 5** adapt and use language, idiom and register as appropriate to the subject matter, context, your relationship with others and the intended nuance
- 6** produce fluent, sustained speech

Element S5.2 Take part in complex and specialised group discussions

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** use a full range of language, including complex and specialist language, to contribute to complex group discussions
- 2** use a full range of language, including complex and specialist language, to exchange specialised information or advice
- 3** use a full range of language, including complex and specialist language, to present arguments and debate pros and cons
- 4** express complex points succinctly and without ambiguity (unless this is intentional)
- 5** adapt and use language, idiom and register as appropriate to the subject matter, context, your relationship with others and the intended nuance
- 6** speak fluently to contribute to multiple and prolonged exchanges

**For terms applicable to sign language, replacing terms such as 'listen to', 'speak', 'words', refer to the glossary.*

Range of use

You can speak:

- In work contexts
- In social contexts relevant to work
- Face-to-face (this can include video-conferencing)
- By telephone/videophone/Web cam
- In informal settings
- In formal settings

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** use vocabulary to deal with all matters within your area of expertise, and other matters as they become necessary in the course of your work
- K2** use current colloquialisms used in business and social contexts
- K3** use an extensive range of idioms and expressions, to convey nuance as appropriate to the context
- K4** use all grammatical forms (morphology) and sentence structures (syntax), except rare or archaic forms and structures
- K5** use a wide range of appropriate discourse markers, to refer forwards and back to significant points in the course of communication
- K6** use a choice of vocabulary and structures which express standard, colloquial, formal and informal registers
- K7** use pronunciation close or identical to that of a native speaker
- K8** use intonation close or identical to that of a native speaker, which is consistently appropriate to what you intend to express (e.g. irony, surprise, doubt, etc.)
- K9** use specialist reference sources (e.g. advanced grammar manuals) as necessary

Unit R5 Read complex and specialist text on all work topics

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you understand complex text relating to a full range of professional activities, including specialist or technical language relevant to your area of work. You can, for example:

- extract relevant information from a range of sources to complete a work task
- understand organisational strategies and policies
- follow specifications for goods or services outside your area of work

Performance criteria

Element R5.1

Understand complex and specialised reports, discussion papers and correspondence

When competent at this level you can:

- 1 understand information, ideas and theories communicated in complex and specialist text
- 2 skim complex and specialist text to grasp the overall meaning
- 3 scan complex and specialist text to extract full details
- 4 identify the content, tone, significance and apparent implied meanings of text
- 5 identify and evaluate nuances in writers' selection of language
- 6 identify social references and the level of formality of the text and their implications for an accurate reading of the text
- 7 quickly process extended passages of text

Range of use

You can read:

- Text relating to your area of work
- Text relating to relevant social activities
- Articles, reports or discussion papers
- Technical manuals or training materials
- Formal correspondence
- Informal correspondence

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** understand vocabulary to deal with all matters within your area of expertise, and other matters as they become necessary in the course of your work
- K2** understand current colloquialisms used in business and social contexts
- K3** understand an extensive range of idioms and expressions, to convey nuance as appropriate to the context
- K4** understand all grammatical forms (morphology) and sentence structures (syntax), except rare or archaic forms and structures
- K5** understand a wide range of appropriate discourse markers, to refer forwards and back to significant points in the course of communication
- K6** understand a choice of vocabulary and structures which express standard, colloquial, formal and informal registers
- K7** use specialist reference sources (e.g. advanced grammar manuals) as necessary

Unit W5 Write complex and specialist text on all work topics

Unit overview

To achieve this unit, you show that you can produce complex text to deal with a full range of professional activities and use specialist or technical language relevant to your area of work. You can, for example:

- produce detailed technical specifications
- create materials, e.g. on products or services, which are fit for public dissemination
- present arguments persuasively
- exchange highly specialised and complex business correspondence

You have a comprehensive grasp of the structures, idioms and expressions of the language. You write fluently on a wide range of topics and in a number of different registers. Any deviation from standard language is intentional (e.g. stylistic) and in keeping with the appropriate register.

Performance criteria

Element W5.1

Write complex and specialised reports, specifications and correspondence

When competent at this level you can:

- 1** use a full range of language, including complex and specialist language, to convey specialised information or advice
- 2** use a full range of language, including complex and specialist language, to communicate ideas and opinions
- 3** use a full range of language, including complex and specialist language, to present and debate arguments
- 4** select register, idiom and style to communicate in ways appropriate to the topic, context and intended impact on the readers
- 5** express nuances appropriate to the purpose of the communication
- 6** produce extended passages of text with complete accuracy

Range of use

You can write:

- Text relating to your area of work
- Text relating to relevant social activities
- Articles, reports or proposals
- Technical evaluations or specifications
- Formal correspondence
- Informal correspondence

Knowledge and skills

You can:

- K1** use vocabulary to deal with all matters within your area of expertise, and other matters as they become necessary in the course of your work
- K2** use current colloquialisms used in business and social contexts
- K3** use an extensive range of idioms and expressions, to convey nuance as appropriate to the context
- K4** use all grammatical forms (morphology) and sentence structures (syntax), except rare or archaic forms and structures
- K5** use a wide range of appropriate discourse markers, to refer forwards and back to significant points in the course of communication
- K6** use a choice of vocabulary and structures which express standard, colloquial, formal and informal registers
- K7** use specialist reference sources (e.g. advanced grammar manuals) as necessary

Glossary of linguistic terms

Term	Spoken languages	Sign language
Accent	The combination of pronunciation, modulation, intonation and fluency you use when speaking a language. NB 'Accents', meaning written marks above or below the letters of certain languages, are not what is meant here.	The combination of rhythm, emphasis, prosody and fluency you use when signing.
Accuracy	When using the Standards, you should note two broad guidelines: a) accuracy is more important in formal than in informal communication and may be vital even at low levels e.g. when writing under a company letterhead; and b) at lower levels, errors in spoken communication are acceptable provided that they do not impair understanding.	When using the Standards, you should note two broad guidelines: a) accuracy is more important in formal than in informal communication and may be vital even at low levels e.g. when writing under a company letterhead; and b) at lower levels, errors in signed communication are acceptable provided that they do not impair understanding.
Ambiguities	Possible double or even multiple meanings of certain words and expressions.	Possible double or even multiple meanings of certain signs and expressions.
Aspect	In the Standards, 'aspect' refers to the time (past, present or future) at which an event is said to happen. For example, in some languages, what is grammatically the present tense can describe the future aspect, e.g. 'I leave for Berlin tomorrow'.	As for spoken languages.
Basic	'Basic' language as described in the Standards is made up of a small range of high frequency, simple words and set phrases. At this level, you can understand and apply these words and set phrases in highly predictable, defined work or social situations.	'Basic' language as described in the Standards is made up of a small range of high frequency, simple signs and set phrases. At this level, you can understand and apply these signs and set phrases in highly predictable, defined work or social situations.
Colloquial(-ism)	Conversational language, often including slang. This may include vocabulary and expressions acceptable among colleagues or in a close working group. Colloquialisms may be inappropriate in formal communications but are appropriate in some settings and can help to build rapport.	As for spoken languages.

Term	Spoken languages	Sign language
Complex	'Complex' language as described in the Standards is made up of complex sentences, specialised words and expressions. A 'complex' sentence is one in which two or more 'simple' sentences are linked together. 'Complex' can also refer to the nature of a task (e.g. a 'complex' discussion may involve several speakers or a sensitive negotiation).	'Complex' language as described in the Standards is made up of complex sentences, specialised signs and expressions. A 'complex' sentence is one in which two or more 'simple' sentences are linked together. 'Complex' can also refer to the nature of a task (e.g. a 'complex' discussion may involve several signers or a sensitive negotiation).
Conditional	Expresses 'if...' - 'then' relationships between two sentences, e.g. 'If you go out in the rain without an umbrella, (then) you will get wet.' The conditional is also used without this literal meaning in polite expressions, e.g. 'I would like a glass of water.'	As for spoken languages.
Convention	An expression, generally in a set form, which is used as a courtesy in certain situations (e.g. to greet or take leave of someone, to open or close a letter). You can often learn conventions by heart without analysing their literal meaning or changing their form.	As for spoken languages.
Context	Refers either to the immediate language (sentence, paragraph, etc) or to the broader work or social situation in which the language is used. In either case, it can affect the vocabulary or expressions you choose, or the way you understand another person's choice of language.	As for spoken languages.
Dialect	A variant of a language which includes different expressions, accents and variations on the standard grammar. A native speaker of a 'standard' language may have some problem with dialects of that language.	A variant of a language which includes different vocabulary and expressions. Dialect usually refers to signing characteristic of a particular region but can also be used more broadly to refer to other types of variants in signing.

Term	Spoken languages	Sign language
Discourse	'Discourse' markers are vocabulary and expressions which are used to make what is being expressed as coherent as possible, e.g. acknowledging what has just been said, indicating whether you are about to agree or disagree, referring back and forwards to what you have said or intend to say.	'Discourse' markers are vocabulary and expressions which are used to make what is being expressed as coherent as possible, e.g. acknowledging what has just been signed, maintaining eye gaze, indicating whether you are about to agree or disagree, referring back and forwards to what you have said or intend to say.
Evaluate	At higher levels, you may need to do more than understand literally a text or a passage of speech. Evaluation means assessing the importance of what is written or said in the work or social context.	At higher levels, you may need to do more than understand literally a text or a passage of sign. Evaluation means assessing the importance of what is signed in the work or social context.
Everyday	In the daily experience of most people.	As for spoken languages.
Extract	To identify facts and data, without necessarily understanding the overall meaning of a piece of text or passage of speech.	To identify facts and data, without necessarily understanding the overall meaning of a passage of sign.
Familiar	Regularly encountered in the course of work or relevant social activities.	As for spoken languages.
Fluency	The ability to speak or write the language with minimal or no hesitation and use of reference sources.	The ability to sign or write the language with minimal or no hesitation and use of reference sources.
Format	The way in which a text or passage of speech is presented, e.g. as a letter, formal lecture etc.	The way in which a passage of sign is presented, e.g. as a letter, formal lecture, story etc.
Gist	The main point or idea of a text or passage of speech.	The main point or idea of a passage of sign.
Grammar	The set of rules and practices according to which the words of a language are assembled and modified to create an infinite range of meaning. At entry and level 1, you may be limited by lack of grammatical knowledge to producing 'set phrases' which are useful only in predictable situations.	The set of rules and practices according to which the signs of a language are assembled and modified to create an infinite range of meaning. At entry and level 1, you may be limited by lack of grammatical knowledge to producing 'set phrases' which are useful only in predictable situations.

Term	Spoken languages	Sign language
Idiom	An expression which means something different from the combination of individual words, so that it cannot be 'literally' translated. 'Idiom' is also used more loosely to mean any expression in the target language.	An expression which means something different from the combination of individual signs, so that it cannot be 'literally' translated (for example 'DRUNK' - wobbling while standing). 'Idiom' is also used more loosely to mean any expression in the target language.
Imperative	The form of words used to give an implicit or explicit order.	The form of a signed sentence used to give an implicit or explicit order
Infinitive	The basic unmarked form of a verb, i.e. the 'dictionary form'.	As for spoken languages.
Intonation	The 'musical' quality of a language, marked by the rise and fall of the voice and emphasis given to syllables and parts of phrases/sentences. This varies significantly between languages. Inappropriate intonation can make it difficult to understand what is meant, or can alter the meaning entirely.	The visual, rhythmic quality of a sign language, marked by changes in facial expression and the emphasis given to signs and parts of phrases/sentences, including e.g. irony. Inappropriate prosody can make it difficult to understand what is meant, or can alter the meaning entirely (for example, questions, negation, etc.).
Interrogative	Sentences which request information about something in the form of a question.	As for spoken languages.
Listen, listen to		For sign language users, these terms should be replaced by 'Understand'.
Manipulate	To make grammatical changes to alter, re-order, substitute or recombine words.	To make grammatical changes to alter, re-order, substitute or recombine signs.
Negative	Statements or questions in which the action is denied are in the negative form, e.g. 'We never accept credit cards' or 'Don't you like coffee?'	As for spoken languages.
Nuance	A shade of meaning, expressed through choice of words and phrases.	A shade of meaning, expressed through choice of signs, manner of articulating signs and phrases.
Phrase	A grouping of words which stands together grammatically but does not make a complete clause or sentence, e.g. 'John's son'. 'Set phrases' are familiar phrases which you can use, without necessarily having the grammatical knowledge to create them (e.g. 'Good morning').	A grouping of signs which stands together grammatically but does not make a complete clause or sentence, e.g. 'John's son'. 'Set phrases' are familiar phrases which you can use, without necessarily having the grammatical knowledge to create them (e.g. 'Good morning').

Term	Spoken languages	Sign language
Positive	Statements or questions in which the action is affirmed are in the positive form, e.g. 'We accept credit cards' or 'Do you like tea?'	As for spoken languages.
Pronunciation	The system of sound values given to individual letters, groups of letters or particular words. Pronunciation of a written letter, for example, can vary significantly between languages. At the lowest levels, a good approximation may be acceptable if it does not impair meaning. At higher levels you would aim for pronunciation closer to that of a native speaker.	The articulation of specific locations, hand shapes, and movements in signs. At the lowest levels, a good approximation may be acceptable if it does not impair meaning. At higher levels you would aim for pronunciation closer to that of a native signer.
Register	A set of speech characteristics which may vary according to relationships between language users, situations and the medium of communication. 'Standard register' is used typically between colleagues, casual acquaintances or strangers, and will usually not involve particular familiarity, technicality, humour, irony or innuendo. Where there is a high degree of familiarity between language users, many informalities may be exchanged which would be laughable or even offensive in a business context. On the other hand, using a formal register in speaking to a close colleague could be construed as cold or linguistically inept.	A set of sign characteristics which may vary according to relationships between language users, situations and the medium of communication. 'Standard register' is used typically between colleagues, casual acquaintances or strangers, and will usually not involve particular familiarity, technicality, humour, irony or innuendo. Where there is a high degree of familiarity between language users, many informalities may be exchanged which would be laughable or even offensive in a business context. On the other hand, using a formal register in communicating with a close colleague could be construed as cold or linguistically inept.
Routine	'Routine' language as described in the Standards combines simple sentence structures, consisting of formulaic language, and some less familiar elements relevant to your occupational area or related social activities.	As for spoken languages.
Scan	To read text in order to find a particular kind of information, e.g. to identify all the product names mentioned in a letter or pick out comments in a report which are favourable and those which are not.	As for spoken languages.

Term	Spoken languages	Sign language
Sentence	A self-contained group of words which makes complete sense, which almost always contains a verb.	A self-contained group of signs which makes complete sense, which almost always contains a verb.
Simple	'Simple' language as described in the Standards is made up of a limited range of common vocabulary, set phrases and 'simple' sentences. A 'simple' sentence is one in which there is just one verb, e.g. 'We received the delivery today'.	As for spoken languages.
Skim	To 'speed read' a text, gaining a quick insight into its content or the writer's perspective, without dwelling on detail.	As for spoken languages.
Speak, speech		For sign language users, these terms should be replaced by 'sign' and 'spoken' should be replaced by 'signed'. Likewise, where the term 'speaker' appears, this should be replaced by 'signer' or (for the productive units 4 and 5) 'presenter'.
Structures	Groups of words assembled according to grammatical rules. The rules of combination of types of words vary between languages and you may have to master different rules to be able to create independent phrases and sentences. When you are required to 'use structures' in the Standards it is assumed that you can build them independently and have not had to learn them a fixed combination of words, without understanding them.	Groups of signs assembled according to grammatical rules. The rules of combination vary between languages and you may have to master different rules to be able to create independent phrases and sentences. When you are required to 'use structures' in the Standards it is assumed that you can build them independently and have not had to learn them as a fixed combination of signs, without understanding them.
Talk		For sign language users, this term should be replaced by 'presentation'. This refers to the one-way presentation of information, and need not necessarily be in a formal setting or format, unless specified.
Words		For sign language users, this term should be replaced by 'signs'.

Where to go for further information and help

BLIS Services

One-stop on-line shop for language and cultural expertise, comprising:

BLIS Jobs	The job site for people with languages
BLIS Professionals	Database of international communication experts
BLIS Courses	Language courses across the UK
BLIS Facilities	Directory of business language support services

www.blis.org.uk

European Language Portfolio

Portable record of language skills, devised by CILT and validated by the Council of Europe.

www.cilt.org.uk/elp.htm

Regional Language Networks

Operating throughout the UK, the Regional Language Networks are supported by CILT in promoting language and cultural skills for business and employment.

www.cilt.org.uk/rln

SOLVIT

A site offering information, advice and solutions for the challenges of international communications

www.solvit.org.uk



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