EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATIONS - 2020
CHINESE
COURSE CODE: CHN315114

External Assessment Specifications inform the development of external assessments. The primary audience for this document is the course Setting Examiner and Exam Critics. It may also be of use to teachers and students.

These specifications must be read in conjunction with the Course Document.

The criteria to be externally assessed are:

- **Criterion 1:** Listen and respond to spoken Chinese
  All aspects of Criterion 1 standards are examinable, except the aspect of requesting repetition and/or rephrasing.

- **Criterion 2:** Communicate in spoken Chinese
  All aspects of Criterion 2 standards are examinable

- **Criterion 3:** Read and respond to written Chinese texts
  All aspects of Criterion 3 standards are examinable, except responses are in written form only. The use of ‘external references’, i.e. dictionary, is not examinable.

- **Criterion 4:** Express ideas and information in written Chinese
  All aspects of Criterion 4 standards are examinable.

The format of the external assessment is:

- an oral examination; and

- a written examination.
WRITTEN EXAMINATION STRUCTURE

The written examination is divided into three (3) parts, each part is allocated sixty (60) minutes. Part 1, the listening and responding items are on CD as spoken texts. The CD is self-running and will be started at the end of the 15 minutes reading time.

The following specifications for each session/part are outlined in the table below:

- the distribution across the sessions/parts of:
  - criteria
  - course content (themes / topics)
  - length, time and mark / rating allocations
- number and type of items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Criterion 1</td>
<td>Criterion 3</td>
<td>Criterion 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course coverage</td>
<td>Theme 1: The Individual</td>
<td>Theme 1: The Individual</td>
<td>Theme 1: The Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 2: Chinese-Speaking Communities</td>
<td>Theme 2: Chinese-Speaking Communities</td>
<td>Theme 2: Chinese-Speaking Communities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Topics are chosen to constitute a representative sample of course content in the three themes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number and nature of items</td>
<td>5 to 74 spoken texts in Chinese for response in English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Each spoken text:</td>
<td>• includes introduction with reference to the reading number and spoken text number</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• is read 3 times</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• includes details / context of the scenario stated verbally on the CD and in writing in the item- and response booklet.</td>
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<td>1st reading, then gap of same length as passage</td>
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<td>2nd reading, then gap of same length as the passage</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd reading, then gap of double the length of passage</td>
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<tr>
<td>The listening time for 1 reading of a spoken text lies between 1 minute 40 seconds and 2 minutes 40 seconds.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A total of three-two (32) texts written in Chinese with total text of 6000-8000 characters.</td>
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<td>Characters used in items are limited to the prescribed list in the course document.</td>
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<tr>
<td>In response to items, candidates are not restricted to the prescribed list of characters.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Section A:</td>
<td>• 2 texts written in Chinese</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• at least 5 items written for each text in English for response in English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Section B:</td>
<td>• 1 text written in Chinese</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• at least 5 items written in Chinese and for response in Chinese. Candidates can NOT respond in pinyin.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Five (5) items, written in Chinese and English for response in Chinese.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Characters used in items are limited to the prescribed list in the course document.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>In response to items, candidates are not restricted to the prescribed list of characters.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compulsory or optional</th>
<th>All items are compulsory</th>
<th>All items are compulsory</th>
<th>Choice of one (1) item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item type(s) / format (See Attachment 1 for definitions and exemplars)</th>
<th>Spoken text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• An approximately equal balance of Two (2) single-person texts — one (1) read by a male; one (1) read by a female and dual-person text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For each of Section A and B:</td>
<td>Text types taken from any relevant text types in the course document.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response format</td>
<td>All non- routine contexts and real-world scenarios.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extended response format</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Two (2) Dual person texts, each read by one (1) male and one (1) female** | **All non-routine contexts and real-world scenarios.**

For each of the 23 texts, a range of items, including at least one item of each of the three types (Types 1, 2 and 3 described in Attachment 1):  
- For Section B only, Type 3 item(s) is multiple choice  
- Each item requiring understanding is independent  

All short, closed-ended responses.  
Candidates are not required to respond in complete sentences. | **Responses use a range of text types from the following types:**  
- conversation/interview  
- diary/journal entry  
- letter/email  
- narrative  
- profile.  

All open-ended responses. |
|---|---|---|
| **Response time** | 60 minutes | 60 minutes | 60 minutes  
**Total character length 170 - 200** |
| **Mark / rating allocation (weighting must be specified)** | 60 marks | 60 marks | All criteria are assessed using extended ratings of A+, A, A-, ... B+, B, B-, ..., C+, C, C-, ... t+, t, t- or z. |

**SPECIFIC MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT APPROVED FOR USE BY CANDIDATES**

Unannotated English-Chinese, Chinese-English (paper based) dictionary/thesaurus (single book only).
ORAL EXAMINATION STRUCTURE

The oral examination consists of an interaction with one (1) or more examiners appointed by TASC and has a duration of 10–12–10 minutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Criterion 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course coverage</td>
<td>Theme 1: the individual All topics: • personal world • education • daily life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item type(s) / format (see attachment 1 for definitions and exemplars)</td>
<td>A range of routine to non-routine contexts and real-world scenarios. A range of short to extended responses. Responses range from closed to open-ended responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response time</td>
<td>7–10, 10–12-minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark / rating allocation (weighting must be specified)</td>
<td>All criteria are assessed using extended ratings of A+, A, A-, ..., B+, B, B-, ..., C+, C, C-, ..., t+, t, t- or z.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ASSESSMENT

A set of solutions or a marking tool will be developed by the Setting Examiner, provided to markers at the marking meeting that follows the external written examination; and will be available from TASC in the following year.

The external assessment must include items that, separately or together, give opportunities to demonstrate the standards from rating C to rating A.

Final results will be awarded as a rating of A, B, C, t or z in the above criteria. These ratings are used in determining the final award according to the algorithm in the course document.
ATTACHMENT 1

EXAMINATION ITEM TYPES

Item types can be categorised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>ITEM TYPES AND DEFINITIONS</th>
<th>EXEMPLARS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Context of the item</td>
<td>Routine context</td>
<td>These items require rehearsed skills in the use of language and in familiar contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-routine context</td>
<td>These items require procedures not previously encountered in expected prior learning activities. These require the combination, and sometimes the selection, of a set of skills in unfamiliar contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenario of the item</td>
<td>Real-world scenarios</td>
<td>These items relate the use of language to the context of the real world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items requiring understanding</td>
<td>Items requiring understanding of a written text range in difficulty along a continuum including the following three types:</td>
<td>Reference: Adapted from a sample paper for Cambridge University &quot;First Certificate in English&quot; <a href="http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams-and-qualifications/first/how-to-prepare/">http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams-and-qualifications/first/how-to-prepare/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Type 1: those where the answer is readily apparent from the information directly available in one or at most two consecutive sentences of the text.
- Type 2: those where the answer requires processing the information in a single paragraph – the required answer is not directly stated in this portion of the text.
- Type 3: those where the answer requires an understanding of some feature of the text as a whole, and the answer is not directly stated in the text.

Each comprehension item should be independent, in the sense that the correct answer to one item ought not to provide an additional clue to the required answer to another.

I shifted uncomfortably inside my best suit and eased a finger inside the tight white collar. It was hot in the little bus and I had taken a seat on the wrong side where the summer sun beat on the windows. It was a strange outfit for the weather; but a few miles ahead my future employer might be waiting for me and I had to make a good impression.

There was a lot depending on this interview. Many friends who had qualified with me were unemployed or working in shops or as labourers in the shipyards. So many that I had almost given up hope of any future for myself as a veterinary surgeon. There were usually two or three jobs advertised in the Veterinary Record each week and an average of eighty applicants for each one. It hadn’t seemed possible when the letter came from Darrowby in Yorkshire. Mr S. Farnon would like to see me on the Friday afternoon; I was to come to tea and, if we were suited to each other, I could stay on as his assistant. Most young people emerging from the colleges after five years of hard work were faced by a world unimpressed by their enthusiasm and bursting knowledge. So I had grabbed the lifeline unbelievingly.

The driver crashed his gears again as we went into another steep bend. We had been climbing steadily now for the last fifteen miles or so, moving closer to the distant blue of the Pennine Hills. I had never been in Yorkshire before, but the name had always raised a picture of a region as heavy and unromantic as the pudding of the same name; I was prepared for solid respectability, dullness and a total lack of charm. But as the bus made its way higher, I began to wonder. There were high grassy hills and wide valleys. In the valley bottoms, rivers twisted among the trees and solid grey stone farmhouses lay among islands of cultivated land, which pushed up the wild, dark hillsides.

Suddenly, I realised the bus was clattering along a narrow street which opened onto a square where we stopped. Above the window of a small grocer’s shop I read ‘Darrowby Co-operative Society’. We had arrived. I got out and stood beside my battered suitcase, looking about me. There was something unusual and I didn’t know what it was at first. Then it came to me. The other passengers had dispersed, the driver had switched off the engine and there was not a sound or a movement.
anywhere. The only visible sign of life was a group of old men sitting round the clock
tower in the centre of the square, but they might have been carved of stone.
Darrowby didn’t get much space in the guidebooks, but where it was mentioned it was
described as a grey little town on the River Arrow with a market place and little of
interest except its two ancient bridges. But when you looked at it, its setting was
beautiful. Everywhere from the windows of houses in Darrowby you could see the
hills. There was a clearness in the air; a sense of space and airiness that made me feel I
had left something behind. The pressure of the city, the noise, the smoke – already they
seemed to be falling away from me.

Trengate Street was a quiet road leading off the square and from there I had my first
sight of Skeldale House. I knew it was the right place before I was near enough to read
S. Farnon, Veterinary Surgeon on the old-fashioned brass nameplate. I knew by the ivy,
which grew untidily over the red brick, climbing up to the topmost windows. It was what
the letter had said – the only house with ivy; and this could be where I would work for
the first time as a veterinary surgeon. I rang the doorbell.

Why did the writer regret his choice of seat as he travelled? [It was on the sunny side
and hot.] (Type 1; 2 marks)

What was the writer wearing? [His best suit] (Type 1; 1 mark)

What type of work was the writer qualified to do? [Veterinary surgeon] (Type 1; 1
mark)

What impression had the writer previously had of Yorkshire?
[Heavy and unromantic region; solid respectability; dullness; lack of charm] (Type 1; 4
marks)

Name two things that surprised the writer about how he was offered the
interview?
[There was no advertisement; he had been contacted without providing an
application; if suitable he would stay on] (Type 2; 2 marks)
Describe one way that the writer's experience of Darrowby differed from that described in the guidebooks? [For example, Guidebook: grey little town; Writer: clearness in the air] (Type 2; 2 marks)

What did the writer find as unusual on arriving in Darrowby? [The only visible signs of life were some old men sitting around the clock tower who could have been made of stone; the lack of activity] (Type 2; 2 marks)

How did the writer recognize Skeldale house? [It was the only house with ivy as it said in the letter] (Type 1; 2 marks)

How did the writer’s attitude change during the passage? A He began to feel he might like living in Darrowby B He became more uncertain about the outcome of the job interview C He started to feel that he was lucky to have an opportunity like this D He started to look forward to having the interview E He felt that the uncomfortable journey was likely to be a waste of time. [A] (Type 3; 2 marks)

Which of the pairs of words describes the characteristics of the writer? A cautious, shy B positive, confident C thankful, confused D relaxed, capable E unhappy, unwilling [B] (Type 3; 2 marks)
| The format of response | \textit{Short response format}  
These items are composed of a brief prompt that demands a response to some stimulus material that varies from a single response to a few written points. This sort of item is suited to assessing the candidate’s ability to:  
\begin{itemize}
  \item recall specific information and methods related to key content
  \item apply rehearsed methods to familiar situations
  \item demonstrate understanding of key concepts in previously unseen stimulus material.
\end{itemize} |
| --- | --- |
|  | \textit{Extended response format}  
These items involve lengthy structured responses. Greater complexity may be due to one or more of, but not limited to, the following:  
\begin{itemize}
  \item a greater cognitive demand of Chinese language concepts
  \item the necessity to select appropriate information
  \item justification of a response via a logical line of reasoning.  
\end{itemize}  
For example: A response to an item in the writing section. |
| Assessment of response | \textit{Closed-ended response}  
These are items for which there is a single ‘correct’ or ‘best’ response. |
|  | \textit{Open-ended response}  
These are items for which there may be multiple correct responses OR in which the quality of the argument and/or the expression is being assessed. |
CHECKLIST

Part 1: Listening and Responding

☐ Assesses all aspects of Criterion 1, except the aspect of requesting repetition and/or rephrasing
☐ Items give opportunities to demonstrate standards from rating C to rating A
☐ Includes course content from all three themes
☐ Includes course content from a representative sample of topics
☐ There are 5–7 spoken texts are in Chinese
☐ Includes a balance of items ranging from short to extended response formats
☐ Items include a range of routine and non-routine contexts
☐ All items are real-world scenarios
☐ Responses to all items are closed-ended
☐ Instruction is given that candidates are not required to respond in complete sentences
☐ Spoken texts are introduced with reference to the reading/spoken text numbers
☐ Spoken texts have approximately equal numbers of single-person and dual person texts
☐ All dual-person spoken texts are read by 1 male and 1 female
☐ Spoken texts are read 3 times
☐ 1st reading – gap of same length as passage
☐ 2nd reading – gap of same length as the passage
☐ 3rd reading – gap of double the length of passage
   The details/context of the scenario of the spoken texts are stated verbally on the CD and in writing in the item-and-response booklet.
☐ The listening time for 1 reading of a spoken text lies between 1 minute 40 seconds and 2 minutes 40 seconds.

Part 2: Reading and Responding

☐ Assesses all aspects of Criterion 3, except responses are in written form only and the use of ‘external references’, i.e. dictionary, is not examinable
☐ Items give opportunities to demonstrate standards from rating C to rating A
☐ Includes course content from all three themes
☐ Includes course content from a representative sample of topics
☐ There are 23 texts in Chinese with a total of 600–800–600 characters
   Texts use a range of text types from the following: Conversation/interview, diary/journal entry, letter/email, narrative, profile
☐ There are least 5 items per text
Section A
- Includes two texts in Chinese
- Items are written in English
- Items call for a response in English

Section B
- Includes one text in Chinese
- Items written in Chinese
- Items call for a response in Chinese (not pinyin)

Section A and B
- Include a balance of items ranging from short to extended response formats
- Items include a range of routine and non-routine contexts
- All items are real-world scenarios
- Include at least one item of each of the three types described in Attachment 1
- Each item requiring understanding is independent
- Responses to all items are closed-ended
- Candidates are not required to respond in complete sentences.

Part 3: Writing in Chinese
- Assesses all aspects of Criterion 4
- Items give opportunities to demonstrate standards from rating C to rating A
- Includes course content from all three themes
- Includes course content from a representative sample of topics
- There are 5 items written in Chinese and English
  - Texts use a range of text types from the following: Conversation/interview, diary/journal entry, letter/email, narrative, profile
- All items are real-world scenarios
- Responses to all items are open-ended.