

Conducting OxfordAQA Listening tests

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This guidance covers listening test conduct for:

- International GCSE English as a Second Language (9280/L)
- International GCSE French (9265/L)
- International GCSE Spanish (9269/L)

Requirements

- 1 Materials required:
 - a device to play MP3 file and working speakers to cover room capacity
 - student question and answer booklets
 - a transcript of the recording
 - a copy of these instructions
 - a copy of the JCQ document [Instructions for Conducting Examinations](#).

Note: The audio file provided has all pauses built into the recording.

Preparation

- 2 The listening test audio file can be found on Centre Services and is accessed by the person who holds the 'Centre Administrator' access (usually the Exams officer):
 - Select the 'Resources' tab:
 - Select 'Assessment and training'
 - Select English or Languages for GCSE French and Spanish
 - Select 'GCSE' and the series options on the left to narrow down the search to the file(s) you require.
 - Create a suitably named folder in the secure location where you want to download the files to
 - Click on the zip file of the materials you need
 - Click 'Unzip the files to a folder I choose'
 - Select the folder you created (at bullet 5 above)
 - Click 'Unzip' to copy the files to your selected folder.

All pauses are included in the recording.

- 3 The audio file may be saved to an encrypted USB for the purpose of delivering the test. The file must be stored in a secure location until as close to the time of exam as possible.
- 4 The listening test audio file, any device this is saved to, and the transcript must be treated as confidential exam materials and must be stored in accordance with the JCQ document [Instructions for Conducting Examinations](#). The recordings must not be checked prior to the exam. The content of the material must not be disclosed to students prior to the exam.
- 5 The device(s), which will be used to play the audio file for the test, should be checked and serviced. Particular attention should be given to ensuring clear sound reproduction.

It is important that the audio file is played on a dedicated device or on a PC or laptop to minimise the risk of the test being interrupted.

- 6 Checks should be made on rooms to find those most suitable for listening tests. The following points should be considered:
- external speakers for the device (or headphones if the test will be played in a language laboratory)
 - curtains or carpets to reduce echo
 - no outside noise.
- 7 A back up MP3 player or PC/laptop should be available in case of emergency.
- 8 The equipment should be set up and tested at least 30 minutes before the start of the tests.
- 9 Storing Listening Tests on a school's computer network or language laboratory.

For the purposes of storing the listening test audio files on a school's computer network, schools may have access to the confidential Listening material **up to three days** before the exam. Prior permission does not need to be sought from OxfordAQA.

The listening test audio file should be downloaded from our secure extranet site Centre Services (see point 2), onto a secure area of the school network, up to **three** working days before the exam.

We recommend that a member of staff from the school's ICT department or the Exams Officer undertakes this task. The material must be downloaded to the secure part of a school's network, i.e., the part of the network which is only accessible to ICT staff and not to students, until the permitted time.

The date of download should be recorded, along with the date the device(s) were placed in secure storage, and when the audio file was removed from the device(s).

Teachers are not allowed to check the recordings after the confidential material has been downloaded onto the secure network.

The device(s) containing the confidential materials for the listening exam must be returned to the school's secure storage facilities as soon as the download to the secure network is completed.

Proper procedures must be in place to ensure this material is kept secure until the exam. Once the listening material has been downloaded, the exam room/area must not be left unsupervised or unlocked. Access to the internet, data stored on the hard drive or any portable media such as floppy disks, CDs or memory sticks is not permitted during the exam.

The use of headphones is acceptable in situations where the listening material has been downloaded onto a school's computer network and is controlled directly and only by the invigilator who will be listening to the recording during the test, for example, in a language laboratory. Students must not under any circumstances have individual control of the recording and invigilators must ensure that this regulation is met.

A subject teacher, a tutor or a senior member of staff who teaches the subject being examined cannot be present in the examination room when the Listening examination is being conducted. This would also apply to a member of staff who has overall responsibility for the students' preparation for the examination, such as a Head of Modern Foreign Languages.

Conduct of the tests

- 10 A transcript of the recording is provided for the information of the invigilator and may be opened not more than 30 minutes before the start of the test.
- 11 The Listening test must be completed in line with the [Instructions for Conducting Examinations](#). Schools are reminded of the following regulation regarding distances between students: **‘The seating arrangements must be such as to prevent students from overlooking, intentionally or otherwise, the work of others; in particular, the minimum distance in all directions from school to school of student’s chairs must be 1.25 metres.’**
- 12 At the start of the test, students must be asked to complete the details on the front cover of their question and answer booklet. They must be reminded to use black ink or a black ballpoint pen to write their answers and that they must write their answers in the spaces provided.
- 13 When all students have completed the details on the front cover of the question and answer booklet, they must be told that they may not open their question and answer booklet until instructed to do so on the recording. The recording should then be played. The instructions on the front cover of the question and answer booklet form the introduction to the recording. Students should be given the opportunity to ask any questions before the five minutes’ reading time is played and informed that once the test begins, they will not be allowed to ask any further questions.
- 14 The five minutes’ reading time is pre-recorded, in common with all other pauses. There should be no reason for the recording to be stopped at any time during the test, except in an emergency. A bleep on the recording will indicate the end of each item.
- 15 No part of the recording should be replayed. Any problems or breaches to the conduct of the test must be reported in writing immediately after the test to irregularities@aga.org.uk. An assessment would then be made regarding whether further investigation is required. A failure to report any such incidents would be considered as maladministration or malpractice.
- 16 A version of the recording, with 25% extra time incorporated, will be available for students entitled to 25% extra time. This must have been agreed through the Access Arrangements process – find out more [here](#).

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- Create a suitably named folder in the secure location where you want to download the files
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- Click ‘Unzip the files to a folder I choose’
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The length of all pauses is extended by 25% in this version of the recording.

- 17 The recording must be played at the original speed.

Problems

- 18 If the test is interrupted, for example by external noise or by the illness of a student, the test should be allowed to continue in accordance with the instructions unless the circumstances are exceptional. No part of the recording is permitted to be replayed. If it is considered that students have been disadvantaged, an application for special consideration should be submitted via the Exams Officer. If there is no disadvantage to students but the recording has been stopped, OxfordAQA must be informed immediately of the incident in writing, and this should be sent to irregularities@aqg.org.uk.
- 19 If the MP3 player/PC/laptop breaks down during the test, students must be supervised in silence and must not be allowed to write. The recording should be transferred to the standby machine and the test continued. Notify irregularities@aqg.org.uk in writing immediately after the test finishes.

After the test

- 20 The audio file(s) must be removed from the device(s), especially if the device will be used in a different assessment.
- 21 The audio file must be retained securely on the school's network but can be used after results day.

GET HELP AND SUPPORT

Visit our website for information, guidance, support and resources at oxfordaqg.com

Email: info@oxfordaqg.com or call us on +44 (0)161 696 5995