

# OxfordAQA

## International GCSE

### CORE English as a Second Language (9285)

## Specimen paper information

For teaching from September 2025 onwards

For International GCSE exams in June 2026 onwards

## INTRODUCTION

This document details the subject content assessed in the specimen paper for the International GCSE CORE English as a second language specification 9285.

The purpose of this information is to support teaching and revision. It is provided in the context of the specimen papers being released for schools to use as a mock examination in May 2025.

## MOCK EXAM PREPARATION

OxfordAQA is providing information on the focus of the content of the upcoming specimen papers for the GCSE CORE subjects. The purpose of this information is to support teaching and revision in preparing students ahead of sitting the specimen papers as internal mock examinations.

The materials may be shared with students and referred to at any point from the date of release. However, we do not advise that students bring these materials into their mock examinations.

## WHAT ARE THE KEY PRINCIPLES TO THIS INFORMATION?

- We have avoided providing too much detail, so that students don't attempt to pre-prepare responses.
- We have made sure this information does not:
  - directly provide answers to any questions
  - compromise the capability of mock examinations to sufficiently differentiate between student performance.

## HOW AND WHEN SHOULD THIS INFORMATION BE USED?

- It can be used as soon as the information is released.
- It can be used flexibly by centres to support student revision and exam preparation. You may choose to allow students to access this information before their mock examination to focus their revision and mock examination preparation.
- We advise against bringing this information into the mock examination.

## INFORMATION

- This notice covers both of the question papers.
- The format/structure of the papers are as follows:
  - Paper 1 Writing, 42 marks, 1 hour, three tasks which test a range of writing skills.
  - Paper 2 Listening and Reading, 78 marks, 1 hour 45 minutes, listen to and answer questions on a range of spoken texts (listening) and short answer and multiple choice questions in response to written questions (reading).

## PAPER 1: WRITING

In order to assist centres and students with their preparation, information has been provided about the audience, form and/or purpose (as applicable), as well as the targeted theme, for questions 02 and 03 on the Writing paper.

Although a theme is specified for each question, it is recognised that students often include in their answers information which might be considered to fall under other topic headings from other themes. They will not be penalised for doing this providing what they have written is relevant to the question asked.

Please note: question 01 requires students to write a short description of what they see in a given photograph, and it may be possible for students to draw on vocabulary from different themes in their responses. Furthermore, for question 01, information about form, audience and purpose is not specified in the task. Therefore details of the scope of question 01 have not been provided.

Question	Audience	Form	Purpose	Theme
02	N/A	Blog post	N/A	1
03	School community	An article	Argue	3

## PAPER 2: LISTENING AND READING

In order to assist centres and students with their preparation, information has been provided about the listening tasks and reading texts, including question styles and source types, as well as the targeted theme and topic.

Although a theme and topic are specified for each text/task, it is recognised that students often include in their answers information which might be considered to fall under other topic headings from other themes. They will not be penalised for doing this providing what they have written is relevant to the question asked.

### Section A: Listening

Task	Question style(s)	Theme	Topic
1	MCQ	1 and 3	Music, cinema and my studies
2	Open response, advantage/disadvantage, list reasons	2	Home, town, neighbourhood and region
3	Fill in the gaps	3	Education post-16
4	Open response, list reasons	1	Customs and festivals
5	MCQ, open response, list, explain in your own words	2	Charity and voluntary work

### Section B: Reading

Text	Source type	Theme	Topic
1	Email	3	My studies, life at school
2	Article	3	My studies
3	Article	2	Charity/voluntary work
4	Opinion article	1	Relationships with family