GATEHOUSE AWARDS

Guidance for Interlocutors (Classic IESOL)

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Purpose:	To provide guidance to Interlocutors who conduct and deliver Gatehouse Awards IESOL spoken examinations.
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Responsibility:	Assessment Manager
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Links to Ofqual GCR	G4, G6, G7, G8, G9
Other relevant documents:	Gatehouse Awards Regulations for Conducting Controlled Examinations Gatehouse Awards Malpractice and Maladministration Policy & Procedure Gatehouse Awards Candidate Access Policy & Procedure Gatehouse Awards Centre Handbook

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1. Purpose & Scope

This booklet contains regulations for the delivery of Gatehouse Awards IESOL spoken examinations. Approved Centres are responsible for ensuring that an initial training session is held for any new Interlocutors.

Interlocutor – an interlocutor is a member of staff, either at Gatehouse Awards or an Approved Centre, who is responsible for the delivery of any speaking, and, in some cases, listening elements of the IESOL examinations. By definition, Interlocutors are not responsible for making assessment decisions. Members of staff trained to and responsible for making assessment decisions will be referred to as Examiners.

2. The Role of the Interlocutor

The Interlocutor is responsible for the delivery of Speaking examinations. The speaking test is conducted on a one-to-one basis as an interaction between the Candidate and the Interlocutor. The only other persons permitted in the room during spoken examination are Gatehouse Awards Examination Observers, members of the internal or external quality assurance team or trainee Interlocutors.

The main function of the Interlocutor is to ensure that the Candidates have the opportunity to perform the communicative tasks as required by the examination to the best of their ability and without undue stress. They are also responsible for eliciting appropriate sample of the Candidate's language for the examiner to arrive at a valid and reliable assessment decision.

This can be achieved by:

- Ensuring that the room used for the examination meets the required standards.
- Ensuring that the content of the examination is recorded properly.
- Following closely the instructions set out in the Interlocutor Booklet.
- Ensuring that the Candidates are given adequate opportunities to speak.
- Keeping to the time limits set out in the Interlocutor Booklet.

3. The Examination Room

When conducting a spoken examination, the room used for delivery:

- Must be free of all items that could be used by the Candidates as prompts, such as posters and notices in English (except for safety notices).
- Should be in a quiet area of the building free from any extraneous noise which could affect Candidates' performance.
- Notices requesting that a quiet environment is maintained, that mobile telephones are switched off and that no one should enter should be posted outside the room.
- Must contain a table (desk) with a minimum of 3 chairs, arranged so that the Interlocutor and the Candidates are sat facing each other and not side-by-side. If another member of staff is present for the purpose of either quality assurance or training, an additional chair should be made available.

4. Examination Equipment

Please ensure prior to the examination that the following items are in place:

- the recordings and suitable player , if applicable
- a digital audio recorder
- a video recorder and a stand, if applicable
- suitable desk(s), chair(s) etc. for the Candidates and Interlocutor and other relevant members of staff
- pens for the Candidates to make notes
- glasses of water for the Interlocutor and Candidates
- a silent clock or stopwatch for the Interlocutor to monitor the Candidates' adherence to the guideline times.

5. Commencement of Examinations

At the beginning of each assessment, the Interlocutor should check each Candidate's ID when they enter the examination room.

Once the ID checks have been completed, the Interlocutor should inform the Candidates:

- to place their belongings at the back of the room away from the examination area.
- that mobile phones and other electronic devices must be switched off.
- that they must present their identification and place it on the desk.
- that no study notes, electronic devices or other papers are allowed in the examination area.
- that no dictionaries are allowed in the examination area.
- if the Candidate wishes to have a relative or friend present in the examination room during the examination, inform them politely that this is not allowed.
- Welcome them to the session and provide instructions on health and safety as necessary (for example, what to do in the event of a fire alarm sounding).
- Explain that the examination will be recorded and it should be completed in one continuous session.
- If not already completed as part of an Invigilated examination, have the Candidates read the 'Instructions to Candidates' and complete the declaration stating that they agree to abide by them.

6. During Examination

- Interlocutor script and instructions can be found in the Interlocutor booklet. Interlocutors must ensure that each Candidate completes all Speaking, guiding the Candidates through each stage in line with the instructions set out in the Interlocutor Booklet.
- All Speaking examination activity should be recorded on the digital voice recorder and video recorded when requested
- The recording should be continuous – no breaks are pauses are allowed in between the tasks.

- The digital voice recorder should be switched on throughout the duration of the examination, and placed close enough to both Candidates and the Interlocutor to ensure clarity of recording.
- In the case of fire or other alarm, all materials, coats, etc., must be left in the room, and both the Candidates and the Interlocutor should leave in accordance with the instructions of the staff responsible for the building and/or the instructions posted in the building. Once an all clear is received, the Candidates should (if it is practical) be allowed to resume the examination.

7. General Guidance for Interlocutors

- The Interlocutor should read the Interlocutor Booklet before the start of the examination to ensure that they are familiar with the script, as well as the time limits for each task.
- The Interlocutor should ensure that the Candidates adhere to the guideline times by firstly monitoring this using the silent clock or stopwatch. If a Candidate significantly exceeds the stated time, the Interlocutor should prompt them gently and politely to move onto the next question /task.
- Where the Interlocutor booklet dictates the exact words to be read aloud to the Candidates, the Interlocutor must not deviate from the script
- Where the Interlocutor booklet allows deviation from the specified script, the Interlocutor should ensure that the language used is at an appropriate level to the level of the examination being conducted.
- The Interlocutor should use delivery appropriate to the level:
    - At levels A1 and A2 speak slowly and clearly in short sentences emphasizing key words
    - At levels B1 and B2, speak clearly at natural speed, as appropriate when speaking to a stranger who may not speak your language fluently
    - At levels C1 and C2, speak in a completely natural way making no concessions to the fact that the Candidates are not a native speaker

Interlocutor DOs

The Interlocutor should:

- ✓ maintain a friendly and relaxed approach at all times, to enable the Candidates to perform to the maximum of their ability.
- ✓ maintain reasonable eye contact with the Candidates, except for preparation times
- ✓ use hand gestures to improve communication – for example by pointing to the appropriate section of Candidate materials
- ✓ use nods and phatic phrases to indicate that you are listening and interested in Candidates' output, for example: 'ah-hah', 'yes', 'OK', 'right', 'I see' etc.
- ✓ use a lively, rising intonation to invite contributions
- ✓ use downward intonation to indicate that a particular element of the assessment is coming to an end

- ✓ speak clearly and with confidence, and <u>use Candidates' names at regular intervals</u> throughout the assessment – this is very important to allow the markers to correctly identify who is speaking when the recording is marked.
- ✓ keep their own input to a minimum, instead they should give Candidates the opportunity to speak and finish their sentences.
- ✓ clearly guide the Candidates throughout the elements of the assessment, indicating whenever they are running out of time or should make further contributions

Interlocutor <u>DON'Ts</u>

Interlocutors should not:

- ✖ echo or rephrase Candidates' answers.
- ✖ correct Candidates' errors.
- ✖ suggest answers, provide vocabulary or expand on Candidates' responses for them. If a Candidate is struggling to find the right word, encourage them to give a definition, description or an explanation instead
- ✖ give any indication of a Candidate's performance, for example 'fine', 'good' or 'that's great'. 'Thank you' is the preferred response.
- ✖ Allow the conversation to lapse into complete silence for more than several seconds where the Candidates might be gathering their thoughts before answering a question or making further contribution
- ✖ Speak too much – the Interlocutors contributions, even those made to elicit further Candidate's contributions or help the Candidate relax, should be brief. Generally speaking, each Candidate should speak between 2 and 3 times as much as the Interlocutor.

For further examination-specific Interlocutor Guidance, please refer to the Interlocutor Booklet.

8. Termination of Examinations

- • Ensure that as the Candidates leave the examination room they do not get opportunity to confer with other Candidates who might still be waiting to take the examination.