Cambridge Pre-U Mandarin Chinese Principal Course

9778/1 Speaking Test

Arranging the Speaking Tests: Instructions for Centres

Instructions for Pre-U Short Course Mandarin Chinese 1341 are produced separately. These are available in the Teachers' Notes Booklet sent to Centres on the basis of Estimated Entries.

1. ARRANGING THE EXAMINER'S VISIT

1.1 All Speaking Tests will take place between 15 March and 15 May of the examination year.

1.2 By **30 November 2012***, you should complete the **Speaking Test Arrangement Form** to indicate any dates which would not be suitable for the Speaking Test. Please note holiday dates and other impossible dates on this form. The Examiners have a tight and busy schedule; in arranging the examination visit the Examiner will take into account dates listed as 'impossible' but Centres will otherwise be expected to accept the dates proposed.

*** Please note**: this date is earlier than in previous sessions.

1.3 You should provide a contact name, phone number and email address of the person responsible for the Speaking Test arrangements. The Examiner will aim to contact this person by telephone by the end of February to arrange suitable dates for the tests. It may take the Examiner some time to arrange his/her schedule, but if the Examiner has not made contact by the end of February, please telephone Cambridge (01223 553554).

1.4 The Examiner will write to you to confirm the dates agreed on the telephone and will also send you a **Speaking Test: Confirmation of Dates Form**. You should complete and return the relevant part of this form by post to the Examiner within two days of receipt.

1.5 You should prepare the timetable form (**Speaking Test – Timetable**) for each day of examinations, taking into account lunch and other breaks. The Examiner should not normally be expected to conduct more than 10 Principal Course examinations per four-hour session. You should require candidates to arrive at a waiting area at least 5 minutes before their Speaking Test is due to start. This timetable should be given to the Examiner when he/she arrives on the first day.

At the beginning of each day of the Examiner's visit, he/she should be given 15 minutes to talk to all of that day's candidates as a group. **Part of the talk will be in English and part will be in the target language.** The purpose of this talk is for the Examiner to:

- introduce him/herself and explain the test procedure to the candidates
- go over the aim of the test
- remind candidates what they can bring in to the test
- accustom candidates to his/her voice and accent.

The Examiner will also need 15 minutes to set up and test recording equipment.

You are reminded that any Short Course candidates you may have are **not** examined by the visiting Examiner.

1.6 Candidates should complete the **Speaking Test – Prepared Topic Submission Form**. These forms should be photocopied and the copies sent to the Examiner by first class post or by email to arrive not later than two weeks before the date of the examination.

1.7 Please make sufficient copies of the Working Mark Sheet and fill in the candidates' names and numbers in advance of the Examiner's arrival.

1.8 All forms are available on the Cambridge Teacher Support website.

2. ACCOMMODATION AND EQUIPMENT

2.1 Quiet conditions

The examination room should be free from any noise and disturbance from outside the building (e.g. lawn mowers). It should preferably not be close to corridors used by large numbers of students between lessons, but if movement within the building is unavoidable, steps should be taken to keep that noise to a minimum. Notices must be displayed to prevent interruptions from people entering the room unaware that a Speaking Test is in progress.

2.2 The examination room

The candidate and the Examiner should be seated opposite each other across a table. The Examiner needs ample table space to arrange his/her documents, but the candidate should be close enough for a rapport to be established. No other persons may be present in the examination room without the express permission of Cambridge International Examinations. Examiners do appreciate a supply of water/tea/coffee!

2.3 Invigilation & Preparation

Though not essential, it is highly desirable to have an invigilator present while Principal Course Mandarin Chinese candidates are waiting their turn.

2.4 Dictionary

Dictionaries are not allowed during the examination.

2.5 Recording

It is a requirement of the examination that all Speaking Tests are to be recorded.

Examiners will record all tests onto a Digital Voice Recorder which they will bring with them. The Centre will not be required to provide recording equipment**.**

Mobile phones must not be brought into the examination room or waiting area.

3. PREPARING THE CANDIDATES

It is in everyone's interests that candidates should be as relaxed and confident as is possible in the circumstances.

3.1 Guidance for candidates

We have prepared a booklet of guidance for candidates (**9778/1 Speaking Test, Notes for Candidates**), which Centres should copy and distribute to their candidates in advance of the examination. This booklet is available from the Cambridge Teacher Support website.

3.2 Prepared Topic Submission Form

This form should be photocopied as required and a copy distributed to each candidate for completion. The completed form should be photocopied and one copy submitted to the Examiner no fewer than two weeks before the Speaking Test (see point 1.6).

3.3 Supporting material

For the Prepared Topic and Topic Conversation, candidates may bring with them into the examination room their copy of their **Speaking Test – Prepared Topic Submission Form**. They may also bring in a 'cue card' (not more than postcard size; maximum number of characters/pinyin syllables = 50) in the language to remind them of the main points they wish to make. No other notes are allowed.

4. TIMING

Principal Course:

- The Principal Course examination will last for approximately 12-15 minutes.
- There should be a few minutes' break for the Examiner after each examination, therefore candidates should be timetabled at least 20 minutes apart.
- You should require candidates to arrive at a waiting area at least 5 minutes before their Speaking Test is due to start.
- Please remember to allow for the Examiner to have breaks as appropriate (e.g. after every 3 or so candidates).
- In the interests of both Examiner and candidates, no more than ten candidates should be timetabled in any four-hour session.

5. ASSESSMENT

All orals are assessed by the Cambridge Examiner in accordance with the assessment criteria. Marks will be awarded as the Speaking Test is taking place. All tests are recorded and sent to Cambridge for moderation.

6. AFTER THE SPEAKING TEST

The Examiner will arrange for the recordings and mark sheets to be submitted to Cambridge for moderation.

7. SECURITY

At all times during the examination, the recordings and Mark Sheets must be kept under conditions of security similar to those in force for examination materials before a written examination. No-one else should have access to the examination room, which must be kept locked when the Examiner is not present.