



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate
Short Course

MANDARIN CHINESE

1341/01

15 March – 15 May 2012

Paper 1 Speaking

TEACHERS' NOTES

12-15 minutes

To be made available to the Chinese teacher on receipt by the Centre, to allow for preparation.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Each candidate's oral examination must consist of the following **two** sections:

Section 1: Prepared Topic and Topic Conversation

Section 2: General Conversation

Both sections should be marked by the Centre according to the instructions and all candidates recorded for external moderation.

This document consists of **20** printed pages.



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1 DATES OF EXAMINATIONS

All teacher-conducted orals must be held during the official examining period:

- 15 March – 15 May for the June session.

It is desirable, in the interests of confidentiality, that the examinations be conducted over as short a period as possible.

2 APPOINTMENT OF EXAMINERS

2.1 Each Centre selects its own teacher/examiner who is responsible for conducting and marking the oral examination for all candidates at that Centre. This is normally a teacher from within the Languages Department and is referred to in this document as the teacher/examiner.

2.2 In the interests of standardisation there will be only one teacher/examiner per Centre. Where a Centre wishes to use additional teacher/examiners because it has a large number of candidates, permission to do so must be sought from CIE before the start of each oral examination period. If permission is given to use more than one teacher/examiner, internal moderation must take place at the Centre to ensure that all its speaking tests are marked to the same standard.

3 MATERIALS FOR THE EXAMINATION

With these instructions Centres should receive:

- labels for the despatch of material to CIE
- envelopes

This material is despatched by CIE on the basis of the Centre's Estimated Entries. It should be made available to the Chinese teacher on receipt by the Centre to allow the teacher/examiner to prepare for the oral examination.

It is the responsibility of the Centre to supply recording equipment (e.g. cassette recorder and microphone) and cassettes/CDs.

4 ACCOMMODATION AND EQUIPMENT

4.1 Quiet conditions

These are essential. 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 noise to a minimum. Notices must be displayed to prevent interruptions from people entering the room unaware that an examination is in progress.

4.2 The examination room

The candidate and the teacher/examiner should be seated opposite each other across a table. The teacher/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 CIE.

4.3 Invigilation

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

4.4 Dictionary

Dictionaries are not allowed during the examination.

4.5 Recording

It is a requirement of the examination that all oral tests are to be recorded, and Centres are responsible for providing equipment of as high a standard as possible for this purpose. If it is at all possible, an external microphone should be used rather than one that is in-built, and it should be placed on a soft surface between teacher/examiner and candidate. Normally it will be necessary to place the microphone nearer to the candidate than to the examiner. Before the start of the examinations the teacher/examiner must make sure that the recording level is satisfactory for both candidates and teacher/examiner.

5 PREPARING THE CANDIDATES

It is in everyone's interests that candidates should be as relaxed and confident as is possible in the circumstances. A number of points should be mentioned here:

5.1 Information sheet for candidates

We have prepared an information sheet of Notes for Candidates (see Appendix E), which Centres may copy and distribute to their candidates in advance of the examination.

5.2 Prepared Topic Form

This form is provided in Appendix D and should be photocopied as required and a copy distributed to each candidate for completion. The completed copy of the form should be submitted to the teacher/examiner no fewer than 4 working days before the oral examination.

5.3 Supporting material

For the Prepared Topic and Topic Conversation only, candidates may bring with them into the examination room brief notes limited to one postcard (maximum number of characters/pinyin syllables = 50). The candidate may also have a copy of the Prepared Topic Form. No other materials are allowed.

6 TIMING

The examination will last for 12-15 minutes, followed by a few minutes' break for the teacher/examiner. Candidates should be timetabled to arrive at the waiting area at intervals of 20 minutes. In the interests of both teacher/examiner and candidates, no more than about 12 candidates should be timetabled on any one day.

7 CONDUCT OF THE EXAMINATIONS

7.1 Recording the examination

The oral tests of all candidates must be recorded.

Before cassettes/CDs are despatched, spot checks must be made to ensure that every candidate has been recorded and is clearly audible. If for any reason the tape/CD fails to record or the recording is inaudible, the test must be re-recorded as soon as possible. Details of any instances of non-recording must be sent to CIE and a copy of the correspondence enclosed when the tape/CD is sent for moderation.

At the beginning of each cassette/CD, the teacher/examiner must record an introduction giving the following information:

- Cassette/CD number
- Centre number
- Pre-U Short Course oral examinations in Mandarin Chinese
- Date (e.g. Wednesday, 22 March)
- Examiner (e.g. Mrs J Smith)

Before the test begins, the teacher/examiner must announce the candidate's number and name, and must not stop the recording for the duration of the candidate's examination.

After the last recording on side A of a cassette, the teacher/examiner should announce 'No more recordings on this side. Recording continues on side B'.

After the last candidate on each cassette/CD, the teacher/examiner must announce 'end of cassette/CD number ...'; and after the last candidate on the last cassette/CD 'end of examination'.

Cassettes

If C90 cassettes are used, not more than 3 candidates should be recorded per side and if C60 cassettes are used, not more than 2 candidates per side. It is off-putting to candidates if a cassette runs out/has to be changed mid-examination and teacher/examiners are asked not to try to record too many candidates per side of a cassette. The cassette must be wound on to the end before turning over or starting a new cassette. As each cassette is used, the labels supplied (Appendix F: please photocopy as required) must be completed with Centre name/number and candidate name/number in recording order. In addition, each cassette must be labelled with syllabus/component number and Centre number.

CDs

Each CD sleeve must be labelled with syllabus name, syllabus/component number, Centre name/number, candidate name/number in recording order. Each CD must be labelled with syllabus/component number and Centre number. CD friendly marker pens must be used to label CDs as the use of biro, for example, may make the contents of the CD unreadable.

Each recorded file on the CD must be clearly named using the following convention:

- Centre number_candidate number_syllabus number_component number.

7.2 Striking a balance

Oral examiners have to find an appropriate balance between two potentially extreme positions. On the one hand, they wish to present themselves as approachable human beings and to conduct the oral in a friendly, relaxed and flexible way. On the other hand, they know that they have the responsibility of administering an agreed standard test which will have national validity and comparability, and that the candidates themselves will expect them to treat the occasion with the thoroughness and seriousness it deserves. It is difficult for CIE to prescribe the exact balance between these extremes.

7.3 Conversational style

In conversation with candidates, a warm and friendly manner will encourage good responses, overcoming some of the nervousness and fear felt by many candidates. A brusque or officious manner may frighten or alienate the candidate, often causing him/her to dry up completely.

7.4 Eye contact

It is also important for teacher/examiners to maintain reasonable eye contact with the candidate; body language, often unnoticed in everyday life, plays an important role.

7.5 Question style

Another temptation is for teacher/examiners to prompt too much and to end up by doing all the talking themselves. It is sometimes difficult to strike the right balance between listening and trying to 'bring the candidate out', especially with the weaker candidates who may have little to say. A little help at a critical moment – by supplying a word the candidate is searching for; by reformulating the candidate's own phrase in a more constructive way; or simply by giving approval and encouragement – can have a positive impact. However, the teacher/examiner should strive to establish a genuine conversation, with the candidate playing as large a part as possible.

7.6 Dealing with errors on the part of the candidate

It is not for the teacher/examiner to correct errors, nor to express consternation or disapproval.

8 COMPONENTS OF THE EXAMINATION

8.1 Format of the examination

The examination consists of 2 sections, which must be conducted in the following order:

- (i) Section 1: Prepared Topic and Topic Conversation – 5-7 minutes
(2 minutes – Prepared Topic; 3 to 5 minutes – Topic Conversation)

followed by

- (ii) Section 2: General Conversation – 6-8 minutes

The oral test lasts for 12-15 minutes, and represents 40% of the total marks for the Pre-U Short Course examination. Centres are advised to timetable candidates every 20 minutes so as to allow the teacher/examiner a short break between candidates.

8.2 Section 1: Prepared Topic and Topic Conversation

- 8.2.1 Candidates will have researched a topic related to the history, current affairs or culture (including art, cinema, literature and traditions) of the Chinese world. The topic should be of personal interest to the candidate. It is not envisaged that candidates at the same Centre would choose the same topic. The teacher/examiner should allow the candidate to speak on their choice of topic for about two minutes uninterrupted and then follow this up with specific questions on the topic. Where a candidate has been talking for two minutes and shows no sign of finishing their initial exposition, the teacher/examiner must interrupt and ask specific questions.

- 8.2.2** It must be stressed that teacher/examiners are not expected to be experts on the Prepared Topics which may be offered by candidates. Even if he/she is very familiar with the subject matter which is being discussed, the teacher/examiner should at all times adopt the position of the intelligent layman, and ask a series of general, open-ended questions, designed to allow candidates to talk freely about the aspects of the Prepared Topic which have particularly interested or engaged them. Whilst candidates must, of course, be given the chance to show what they know and can do, they must not be allowed to give a series of highly prepared mini-presentations.

Many teacher/examiners will be fully conversant with the topics to be discussed by candidates. The danger here lies (consciously or unconsciously) in expecting the candidates to produce in the examination a known body of knowledge and in limiting the questioning style to triggers which will bring forth this knowledge. Teacher/examiners have a particular responsibility in this respect to ensure that they do not pitch all their questions at a level which they know candidates are able easily to handle, but instead seek to approach the topic from an unexpected angle, and to include questions which stretch and provoke thought in the candidates, allowing them access to the higher range assessment criteria.

- 8.2.3** Once the initial presentation of approximately 2 minutes is over, this section of the examination is intended to be a conversation and should not be allowed to develop into a monologue on the candidate's part. Frequent questions should be asked. The precise balance between candidate and teacher/examiner is obviously at the discretion of the teacher/examiner, and will probably vary from candidate to candidate.

The teacher/examiner should be sensitive to the needs of the individual candidate in terms of his/her own contribution, but should ensure that the candidate is given the opportunity to open up the topic and to perform at the top range of the criteria, offering ideas and opinions.

- 8.2.4** Teacher/examiners should not expect candidates to speak in the form of complete sentences, as this would be unrealistic in natural conversation, but of course candidates whose conversation consists largely of monosyllabic or disjointed replies cannot get much credit for such a performance. A great measure of responsibility rests here with the teacher/examiner, who should design the questions and guide the conversation in such a way that the candidate is obliged to be articulate and encouraged to express his/her ideas in extended form. The conversational nature of the exercise should at all times be borne in mind. Candidates will, in many cases, have prepared their Topic thoroughly, and may attempt to give a series of 'mini-presentations'. Whilst they must of course be given the chance to show what they know and can do, they must not be allowed to reel off set pieces without being challenged by questions which make them think 'on their feet' and provide access to the higher level assessment criteria.

Candidates may, if they wish, bring into the examination a 'cue card' (not more than postcard size; maximum number of characters/pinyin syllables = 50) to support the discussion of the topic. They should not, however, be penalised if they do not do this. Candidates may refer to this material during the conversation, but must not be allowed to read out sections (apart from e.g. statistics, quotations). If they attempt to do this, the teacher/examiner should interject with questions. Teacher/examiners should bear in mind that the aim of the examination is to test candidates' speaking ability.

8.3 Section 2: General Conversation

8.3.1 This part of the examination should follow on without a break from Section 1. However, the teacher/examiner should indicate to the candidate that the first section of the examination has finished and that the General Conversation section is beginning.

8.3.2 The General Conversation section will begin with straightforward questions about the candidate's background and interests and move quickly on to a more mature conversation covering 2/3 of the following Topic Areas:

- 1 Family
- 2 Young People
- 3 Education

Questions in the General Conversation section should not cover the same ground as has been dealt with in the Prepared Topic and Topic Conversation. Teachers/examiners must ensure that candidates are not all asked the same series of questions. Appendix C gives some guidance to teacher/examiners on how straightforward questions on the Topic Areas can move into more mature discussion.

8.3.3 As in Section 1, the teacher/examiner should at all times adopt the position of the intelligent layman, and ask a series of general, open-ended questions, designed to allow candidates to talk freely. Teacher/examiners should ensure that they do not pitch all their questions at a level which they know candidates are able easily to handle, and should include questions which stretch and provoke thought in the candidates, allowing them access to the higher range assessment criteria.

8.3.4 Although teacher/examiners should not expect candidates to speak in the form of complete sentences, as this would be unrealistic in natural conversation, candidates whose conversation consists largely of monosyllabic or disjointed replies cannot get much credit for such a performance. It is the responsibility of the teacher/examiner to ask questions and guide the conversation in such a way that the candidate is obliged to be articulate and encouraged to express his/her ideas in extended form. The conversational nature of the exercise should at all times be borne in mind. Candidates will in many cases have prepared the topic areas listed in the syllabus thoroughly, and may attempt to give a series of 'mini-presentations'. Whilst they must of course be given the chance to show what they know and can do, they must not be allowed to reel off set pieces without being challenged by questions which make them think 'on their feet' and provide access to the higher level assessment criteria.

8.3.5 Teacher/examiners should normally allow the stipulated length of time for each candidate. Whilst some candidates may dry up after a few minutes, it is important to persevere with the conversation (e.g. by complete changes of subject), so that candidates are given every opportunity to do themselves justice.

9 ASSESSMENT

All orals are to be assessed by the teacher/examiner in accordance with the criteria (see Appendix A). Marks for each section of the oral must be awarded as the examination is taking place (not afterwards from the recording) and entered on the Working Mark Sheet (see Appendix B).

These detailed marks must be added up and the relevant totals submitted to CIE, either by transferring them to the computer-printed MS1 Internal Assessment Mark Sheets or electronically. Care must be taken to ensure that all additions and transfers are correct. CIE cannot take responsibility for the submission of incorrect total marks.

10 INTERNAL MODERATION

Teacher/examiners are reminded that it is the responsibility of the Centre to award marks to produce a single, valid and reliable order of merit which reflects the attainment of all the candidates at the Centre. This means that where permission to use more than one teacher/examiner is granted by CIE, internal moderation must take place at the Centre to ensure that all its speaking tests are marked to the same standard. Evidence to show that effective internal moderation has been carried out must be retained in all cases where the Centre's single order of merit is the result of combining two or more orders of merit within the Centre and an account of the Centre's internal moderation procedures must be enclosed with the materials for moderation when these are submitted to CIE. Separate Working Mark Sheets should be submitted for each teacher/examiner, with candidate names and numbers clearly entered.

11 AFTER THE EXAMINATION – DESPATCH OF MARK SHEETS AND RECORDINGS

The final deadline for receipt by CIE of mark sheets and recordings is 22 May. However, Centres are requested to return these items once all the speaking tests have been completed and not to wait until the end of the official examining period before despatching mark sheets and recordings to CIE.

- 11.1** The Board copy of the completed MS1 Internal Assessment Mark Sheet must be returned to CIE in the separate envelope provided, to arrive by no later than 22 May (where Centres are returning marks electronically, electronic files must be submitted by 22 May).
- 11.2** The Moderator copy of the completed MS1 Internal Assessment Mark Sheet (or a print-out of the Internal Marks Report if marks are submitted electronically), a copy of the completed Working Mark Sheet(s) and the recordings of all candidates must also be sent, to reach CIE by no later than 22 May. A label and envelope will be provided for this purpose.
- 11.3** Copies of both types of mark sheet are to be retained by the Centre in case of postal losses or delays.

12 SECURITY

At all times during the examination, the tapes/CDs, and mark sheets must be kept under conditions of security similar to those in force for examination materials before a written examination.

APPENDIX A: THE MARK SCHEME

1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 Teacher/examiners are urged to use the full range of marks, bearing in mind that it is not necessary for a candidate to be of native speaker standard in order to be given maximum marks within any single category.
- 1.2 The general approach is a positive one and marks should be awarded based on what the candidate can do rather than deducted for errors.
- 1.3 Above all else, teacher/examiners should **be consistent in their marking**. The moderation process allows for adjustments to be made to consistently harsh or consistently generous marking.

2 MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

Enter the marks for each element of the oral examination on the Working Mark Sheet (see Appendix B) as you conduct the examination.

Once the marks for the individual sections of the examination have been awarded, add them up and enter the total, in large figures, in the column of the Working Mark Sheet headed 'Total'. Please double check the addition, as even small errors create problems.

2.1 Table A: Prepared Topic (15 marks)

- (i) Enter a mark out of 10 for Content/Presentation on the Working Mark Sheet.

Candidates whose Prepared Topic does not relate to the Chinese world should have their mark for Content/Presentation halved.

- (ii) Enter a mark out of 5 for Language.

Content/Presentation Knowledge of facts; ability to express opinions and raise issues for discussion.	Language
9–10 Full and well organised coverage of the topic; ideas and opinions included as well as factual points; lively presentation; Examiner's interest sustained.	5 Has a very good feeling for the language; speaks fluently and accurately; shows good use of relevant idiom and uses a wide range of structures and vocabulary.
7–8 Good exposition and sound organisation of the topic; makes relevant factual points though may be less good in ideas and opinions; presentation somewhat stilted though keeps Examiner's interest.	4 Speaks fairly fluently and accurately; uses idiom with a reasonable range of structures and vocabulary.
5–6 Adequate exposition of the topic; few ideas or opinions; evidence of preparation but presentation pedestrian.	3 May speak with hesitation; adequate range of structures and vocabulary; no ambiguity of meaning.
3–4 Material thin; rambling, repetitious; hardly any ideas or opinions; in danger of losing the Examiner's interest.	2 Marked hesitation; limited range of structures and vocabulary; leading to some ambiguity of meaning.
0–2 Very little factual information; material irrelevant; vague, arguments incoherent; little effort at presentation.	0–1 Very marked hesitation; severe limitations of structures and vocabulary; thought processes basically influenced by mother tongue.

2.2 Table B

Topic Conversation (15 marks)

- (i) Enter a mark out of 5 for Comprehension and Responsiveness on the Working Mark Sheet.
- (ii) Enter a mark out of 10 for Accuracy and Range of Language.

General Conversation (15 marks)

- (i) Enter a mark out of 5 for Comprehension and Responsiveness on the Working Mark Sheet.
- (ii) Enter a mark out of 10 for Accuracy and Range of Language.

Comprehension and Responsiveness	Accuracy and Range of Language
5 Very good No problems of comprehension. Responses are natural and spontaneous even to unexpected questions. Able to present and defend a point of view in discussion.	9–10 Very good Consistently accurate. Only occasional minor slips. Extensive range of appropriate vocabulary. Able to use a wide range of structures with confidence.
4 Good Few problems of comprehension. Responds thoughtfully, and copes fairly well with unexpected questions. Reasonably forthcoming but tends to follow Examiner's lead.	7–8 Good Accuracy generally good, with more frequent errors than in the very best candidates. Shows a sound basic understanding of grammatical usage. Has sufficient range of vocabulary and structures to handle reasonably mature subjects.
3 Satisfactory Understands questions on basic situations and concepts, but has difficulty with more complicated ideas. Some delay in response. Needs encouragement to develop topics. OR Relies heavily on prepared responses.	5–6 Satisfactory Accuracy indicates a measure of competence but with some obvious and significant gaps in grammatical usage. Limited expression of ideas (but not ambiguity) caused by limitations in range of vocabulary and some structures.
2 Weak Has general difficulty in understanding. Limited response to questions on the majority of topics raised.	3–4 Weak Generally inaccurate use of the language. Severe limitations of vocabulary and structures restrict discussion to a very basic level.
0–1 Poor Severe problems of comprehension. Very marked hesitation. Limited responsiveness.	0–2 Poor No grasp of grammatical accuracy. Errors constant and repeated. Very restricted vocabulary. Only simple sentences and no variety of structure.

2.3 Table C: Impression – Feel for the Language & Accuracy of Tones (15 marks)

At the end of the examination you should make an assessment of the candidate's Feel for the Language and Pronunciation/Accuracy of Tones. This must be based on the candidate's overall performance.

- (i) Enter a mark out of 10 for Feel for the Language on the Working Mark Sheet.
- (ii) Enter a mark out of 5 for Pronunciation/Accuracy of Tones.

Impression

Feel for the Language	Pronunciation/Accuracy of Tones
9–10 <i>Very good</i> Has a very good feeling for the language and is able to express concepts fluently in appropriate idiom. Negligible influence from the mother tongue.	5 Outstanding pronunciation and accuracy of tones; an occasional slight mistake or hesitation. Not necessarily a native speaker.
7–8 <i>Good</i> Has a very good feeling for the language. Shows competent use of relevant idiom. Avoids significant influence from mother tongue.	4 Good pronunciation and accuracy of tones; some mistakes and/or hesitation.
5–6 <i>Satisfactory</i> Feeling for the language evident with some occasional use of relevant idiom. Thought processes and expression are influenced by mother tongue.	3 A fair degree of accuracy in pronunciation and tones; quite a number of errors.
3–4 <i>Weak</i> Has scant feeling for the idiom. Generally translates literally from the mother tongue.	2 Intelligible but shows marked influence of mother tongue and very many errors of pronunciation; inaccurate tones.
0–2 <i>Poor</i> Has no feeling for the target language.	0–1 Very poor; many gross errors; frequently incomprehensible.

Appendix B



MANDARIN CHINESE
(1341/1)

WORKING MARK SHEET
PRE-U SHORT COURSE

June	2	0	1	2
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Centre Number						Centre Name						
Language: Mandarin Chinese						Short Course	Syllabus Number	1	3	4	1	

[illegible]

Name of Examiner		Signature		Date						
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APPENDIX C: DEVELOPING A GENERAL CONVERSATION

The General Conversation should begin with straightforward questions about the candidate's background and interests and move quickly on to a more mature conversation covering the three Topic Areas listed in the syllabus:

- Topic Area 1: Family
- Topic Area 2: Young People
- Topic Area 3: Education

There are no set questions for the General Conversation, but this Appendix gives examples of how a mature conversation can develop from a very straightforward initial question. These examples are not a prescribed list of questions, but illustrate the level of questioning appropriate to the examination. The examples are in English but in the examination all questions and answers must be in Chinese.

Although candidates will have prepared the prescribed Topic Areas and practised discussing these with their teachers, in the examination the teacher/examiner's questioning must allow a spontaneous and natural conversation to develop. All three Topic Areas can be developed in a number of directions and candidates should not know beforehand which aspects of the prescribed Topic Areas will be covered, nor should they be able to predict which questions they will be asked. Candidates in a Centre must not all be asked the same series of questions.

Topic Area 1: Family

Tell me about your family

Do you enjoy spending time with your family? Why/why not?
What do you think is a typical family in China/in the UK?
How are attitudes to the family different in China to those in the UK? Why do you think this is?

Do you see your extended family?

Do you enjoy getting together with your extended family? Why/why not?
As you grow up, will you keep in touch with your extended family e.g. grandparents, cousins, aunts and uncles? Why/why not?
How important a role do you see them playing in your future life?
How are attitudes to the extended family changing?

Topic Area 2: Young People

Tell me about your friends

Why are they important to you?
How much do your friends help you in your daily life? What sort of help do they provide?
Who do you listen to more, your friends or your parents? Why?
Will you try to keep in touch with your friends when you leave school? How will you keep in touch? Why will you keep in touch?

Tell me about your interests

Why do you enjoy these? Do youngsters in the UK and China enjoy doing the same things? Why/why not?
What sort of problems do young people today have to cope with?
What do you like about being young today?

Topic Area 3: Education

Tell me about your school

Is it a good school? Why/why not?

How would you like to change it? Why?

What differences do you think there are between the education system here and the one in China?

What can we learn from the education system in China and vice versa?

What is the point of education?

What subjects are you studying?

Why?

What do you think about your Chinese course? How do you think it could be improved?

Why do you think it is important to learn Chinese in the modern world?

Do you think that the Chinese language will become more important than English in the next 50 years? Why/why not?

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Prepared Topic Form for Oral Examination

**To be completed by the candidate and submitted to the teacher/examiner
no fewer than 4 working days before the Oral Examination.**

Centre Name: Centre Number:

Candidate's Name: Candidate's Number:

Please use this form to list the area of your chosen Prepared Topic. Please note that your chosen Topic must relate to the history, current affairs or culture (including art, cinema, literature and traditions) of the Chinese world.

You should hand a copy of this form to your teacher/examiner no fewer than 4 working days before the Oral Examination. You may keep a photocopy if you wish.

Area of Prepared Topic

.....

.....

.....



Mandarin Chinese Short Course

1341/1

Notes for Candidates – Oral Examination

Notes for Candidates

As a candidate, you will want to perform at your best. These notes are intended to help you do that.

FORMAT OF THE EXAMINATION

The examination consists of two sections, which will take place in the following order:

Section 1: Prepared Topic and Topic Conversation (5-7 minutes).

Section 2: General Conversation (6-8 minutes).

The test will normally be conducted and marked by either a teacher at your school/college, or by some other suitable person selected by your school/college. It will take place before the written examinations, between 15 March and 15 May. All the oral examinations for this Pre-U short course will be recorded and the recordings sent to Cambridge for checking by a moderator.

The oral examination tests a range of language skills – pronunciation and accuracy of tones, accuracy, range of expression, spontaneity and fluency – all of which are a natural part of conducting a conversation. If you wish to score high marks, you should make an effort to use a variety of topic-specific vocabulary, not just common words, and a variety of linguistic constructions.

You are NOT allowed to use any dictionary during any part of the examination.

SECTION 1

Prepared Topic

- Your examiner will already have the form listing the area of your prepared topic.
- You will be expected to give a presentation of about 2 minutes on this topic. This can be prepared at any time during the course, so you will have time to research a topic you are interested in. It is worth resisting the temptation to choose a topic too early on, as over-preparation may leave you feeling bored with your chosen subject.
- Your prepared topic must relate to the history, current affairs or culture (including art, cinema, literature and traditions) of the Chinese world. Where you do not fulfil this condition, the potential mark for the content of the presentation will be halved.
- It will be up to you to show what you know and to communicate your interest and knowledge to the examiner. You will need to show evidence that you can present relevant facts, express ideas and opinions and put forward points for discussion. When choosing a topic, consider in what ways a conversation about it might develop: if you cannot think of half a dozen questions you could be asked about it, it is unlikely to present a fruitful source for discussion. If the only way to continue conversation on the topic would be to ask for additional factual information, the topic is unlikely to score highly for the expression of opinions.

- You **may not** bring in a script for your presentation. If you wish, you may prepare, and bring into the examination room, a cue card (postcard size, maximum number of characters/pinyin syllables = 50) to remind yourself of the points you wish to make.
- If after speaking for about 2 minutes you show no sign of coming to the end of your prepared material, the examiner will probably interrupt you and start asking questions.

The presentation will lead into a conversation about your chosen topic.

Topic Conversation

- During your delivery of the prepared topic, your examiner may possibly make notes and will be considering what direction the questioning might take. The mark scheme requires assessment of both comprehension and responsiveness, so try to develop your answers beyond simple short responses. In the course of the topic conversation, you must be prepared to substantiate, elaborate, clarify, qualify, etc, issues from the presentation. This may involve being asked to supply additional factual information where appropriate, or to express and defend a point of view. The examiner's objective will be to encourage you to contribute as much as possible to the conversation and to advance beyond simple sentence responses, without playing too large a part in the conversation him/herself.
- Having completed the topic conversation section, your examiner will probably signal the beginning of the general conversation, with some comment such as '...fine, now let's move on to something more general ...'.

SECTION 2

General Conversation

- This section will begin with some fairly straightforward questions and will move quickly on to a more mature conversation discussing more abstract and/or current issues relating to the 3 topic areas listed in the syllabus.
- You should be able to discuss some matters of current interest relating to these topic areas, though it will not be assumed that all candidates will be closely informed on all matters of serious contemporary concern. The type of question is again important: the examiner may use closed questions, such as 'Do you like...?' to gain some information, but 'why ...?', 'how ...?', 'what do you think about ...?' will give you more scope to extend your responses and opportunities to develop and guide the conversation in a direction which you find interesting.
- The general conversation section should not consist of a predetermined series of questions to which you are expected to provide a 'correct' factual answer, but should rather develop into a genuine conversation, in which there may be no 'correct' answers, only an exchange of opinions. You should take this opportunity of expressing your own ideas, rather than merely responding as briefly as possible to questions asked.
- The examiner will not necessarily ask you about all three topic areas listed in the syllabus. How many topic areas are covered will depend on how the conversation progresses.
- You may not take any notes into the examination for this section of the test.

Do remember that the examiner is on your side and wants to reward your strengths – but cannot do this if you keep them hidden!

APPENDIX F: CASSETTE LABELS

CIE Pre-U Mandarin Chinese Short Course										JUNE 2012	
Syllabus no.		1	3	4	1	Paper 1		Speaking			
Centre No.							Centre Name				
Candidate No.		Candidate Name									
										Cass Card Pre-U	

CIE Pre-U Mandarin Chinese Short Course										JUNE 2012	
Syllabus no.		1	3	4	1	Paper 1		Speaking			
Centre No.							Centre Name				
Candidate No.		Candidate Name									
										Cass Card Pre-U	

CIE Pre-U Mandarin Chinese Short Course										JUNE 2012	
Syllabus no.		1	3	4	1	Paper 1		Speaking			
Centre No.							Centre Name				
Candidate No.		Candidate Name									
										Cass Card Pre-U	

CIE Pre-U Mandarin Chinese Short Course										JUNE 2012	
Syllabus no.		1	3	4	1	Paper 1		Speaking			
Centre No.							Centre Name				
Candidate No.		Candidate Name									
										Cass Card Pre-U	

CIE Pre-U Mandarin Chinese Short Course										JUNE 2012	
Syllabus no.		1	3	4	1	Paper 1		Speaking			
Centre No.							Centre Name				
Candidate No.		Candidate Name									
										Cass Card Pre-U	

CIE Pre-U Mandarin Chinese Short Course										JUNE 2012	
Syllabus no.		1	3	4	1	Paper 1		Speaking			
Centre No.							Centre Name				
Candidate No.		Candidate Name									
										Cass Card Pre-U	

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