



2013 Languages: Auslan GA 3: Interactive sign examination

Interactive Sign Examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Interactive Sign Examination assesses students' ability to communicate in Auslan. When preparing for this examination, students must familiarise themselves with the specific requirements of this task as specified in the *VCE Auslan Study Design*, including the grammar and language requirements appropriate for students at this level.

Students need to be reminded not to look at the 'marking assessors' during the examination, but to focus on the assessor conducting the examination.

Students' performances in the oral examination varied. There appeared to be a strong correlation between thorough preparation and a successful outcome.

Advice for students

- Avoid prepared/automatic responses.
- Give a detailed response to a given prompt.
- Practise a variety of approaches to signing.
- Use a wide range of vocabulary including lexical colloquial signs.

Students are reminded to sign their student number to the assessor conducting the examination.

The sign formation of some students was incorrect in one or more aspects; for example, hand shape and orientation.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation and discussion

Students are required to converse about their personal world (for example, home life, family and friends, schooling, interests and aspirations and current events). Students were expected to discuss these topics freely and confidently, using a variety of grammatical structures and appropriate vocabulary, as outlined in the study design.

Students should be familiar with the assessment criteria. Those who prepared well were able to communicate effectively with the assessors. These students provided detailed responses to the questions and were able to elaborate on the information they presented, giving their opinions, ideas and reasons for their statements. They readily and confidently carried the conversation forward, and provided original and varied responses. Highly successful students used accurate signs, which made their communication clear and authentic. In addition, these students demonstrated their knowledge of sign language by using an excellent range of vocabulary, grammatical structures and tenses accurately and appropriately.

Students in the middle band were generally able to communicate with the assessors, despite some hesitation. They provided a satisfactory range of information, but often had difficulty justifying or clarifying their opinions and relied on the assessors' questions in order to advance the conversation. Their communication was generally good, with only minor slips or errors. These students demonstrated a good control of simple structures, with a range of both grammar and vocabulary.

Students who were not adequately prepared struggled to maintain effective communication with the assessors. They were often very slow to respond and required considerable support to advance the conversation. These students were able to give some information but had difficulty elaborating on their ideas with opinions or reasons, which resulted in responses being too brief and lacking in depth. Furthermore, these students lacked control of both vocabulary and grammatical structures, and used a very limited range of vocabulary.



1. Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively

Well-prepared students were able to successfully connect with the assessor. They effectively communicated and used repair strategies appropriately when required. They required no support from the assessor conducting the examination in maintaining the exchange.

2. Relevance, breadth and depth of treatment of information, opinions, ideas

Successful students were able to use a range of relevant information, opinions and comments throughout the conversation.

3. Clarity of expression and fluency of expression

Successful students used very effective signing.

4. Accuracy of vocabulary and discourse structures

Successful students used very accurate vocabulary and grammatical structures, and were well aware of the cultural conventions of informal signing.

5. Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammatical structures

Successful students used a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures.

Section 2 – Presentation and response

Students were given three minutes to clearly and briefly introduce the presentation.

Student supported the Presentation (three minutes) and response (five minutes) with objects such as photographs, diagrams and maps. Notes and cue cards were not permitted.

There was still a problem with some students choosing inappropriate topics for their formal presentation. Teachers need to be aware of their responsibility to supervise and assist students in selecting their topics to ensure they are appropriate for the task at hand.

Students need to commence with an interesting opening and be specific about the topic they will present. On some occasions, the assessors were unclear what the topic was about, and it was not until more than halfway through that they realised what the topic was actually about.

Students need to take care in choosing an appropriate title or introduction for their topic.

Some students presented interesting topics, but failed to include a proper introduction and conclusion.

Students should

- choose formal topics they are familiar with
- avoid topics covered in the Conversation section
- use a wide range of information for their discussion
- have a beginning, middle and an end to their presentation
- have a presentation that is three minutes in length
- answer questions directly
- be prepared to answer more detailed questions on the presentation
- maintain eye contact with the assessor conducting the examination
- use classifiers where appropriate
- use space appropriately.

In 2013, there was a marked improvement in

- the use of classifiers
- role shift
- colloquialisms

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- use of space
- the use of formal or informal Auslan.

1. Capacity to sustain a presentation and response in a formal signing context

There were many confident responses. The less successful students were often unable to elaborate on or defend their ideas. It is useful for students to prepare adequately by anticipating questions based on their introduction, and by practising answers and elaborating on their themes. This will enable them to build confidence and respond with something more than an extension or repetition of a basic response.

Successful students connected well with assessors and maintained the exchange with little or no assistance.

2. Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas

The more successful students provided opinions that displayed their command of the topic effectively. However, for some students, further ideas and detail were needed to explore topics more thoroughly.

3. Clarity of expression and fluency of expression

Successful students used their signing space and formal structures correctly.

4. Accuracy of vocabulary and discourse structures

Responses ranged from poor to very good. Many students used simple and predictable language, and others used a good variety of structures. Few students used English structures.

5. Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammatical structures

Very good students used a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, which were appropriate to the context, audience and purpose of the task.

Students need to be reminded

- to sign their student number in Auslan
- not to sign their first name, surname or the name of their school
- not to ask the assessor questions about their family
- not to overuse rhetorical questions
- to familiarise themselves with all components of the examination
- to use the correct form of address when signing with the assessor at the commencement of the examination and when taking leave at the end of the examination; for example, 'Thank you for watching my presentation today' or 'Enjoy your day' are not appropriate responses.

It would be valuable if teachers could

- instruct students how to use enumeration correctly when listing family members (phonologically incorrect use of movement)
- teach students common fingerspelled words such as *so, do, but, too, it*, etc., as this is part of the Auslan vocabulary
- instruct students in the correct fingerspelling orientation
- instruct students to interact only with the assessor conducting the exam.

In the 2013 examination, students had difficulties with

- reading and understanding the assessor's question
- read-back in fingerspelling
- connecting with the assessor
- clarifying or elaborating on opinions and ideas and needed frequent support from the assessor
- a range of structures and vocabulary
- the use of classifiers in general
- the overuse of nodding
- the use of space when signing a variety of numbers.



Sign Comprehension and Sign Production Examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, students performed well in the 2013 Auslan Sign Comprehension and Sign Production Examination in 2013.

Students had no problems using the DVD and the computer software.

Students must practise during the year to do only one recording of their work and ensure the entire response has been recorded.

Some responses lacked succinct answers to the questions, and instead the students went beyond the required answers. This weakened their responses and demonstrated a lack of comprehension skills. Students must use the information given in the resources to answer the task.

Students must

- read the task carefully
- answer the task
- use the resources to answer the task
- understand key terms such as 'explain', 'compare' and 'understand'
- look into the camera and maintain eye contact
- avoid repeating signs
- not sign their name and sign only their student number, formal or informal, and the draft number
- structure their response with a beginning, middle and an end
- avoid making cultural mistakes and using slang
- avoid using English grammar
- avoid linguistic errors.

In preparation for this examination students must

- use the 10 minutes of reading/viewing time. During the reading/viewing time they can access their dictionary if necessary
- practise focusing the camera on themselves. They should be able to see themselves from head to waist and from one shoulder to the other. They must sit up straight while recording and should not bend forward
- always look into the camera when recording. Where the response is for only one person they need to look into the camera. Where they are responding to a group of people, they should move their head from side to side, showing that they are responding to a group, rather than an individual
- ensure they have recorded a response. They must check all files to see that they have recorded themselves
- watch the position of their hands; palms should be facing inward towards the student's chest
- avoid wearing colourful (especially fluorescent) tops. Grey, white, light grey or light blue are acceptable. Hair should be tied back
- use their time wisely. The texts are repeated three times
- clearly indicate at the start of each draft their student number, formal or informal, and the draft number
- answer the task, but not repeat the resource presented. When reading the task, students should carefully refer to both the DVD and the hard copy of the exam paper to ensure they have accurately understood the task
- check signs in the resources on the DVD if they are unsure of signs
- commence their answer in an appropriate way, remembering that Auslan is a visual language and if they get stuck, or are not sure how to start, to imagine the scene visually.

Students are still

- producing too many drafts. The first draft is usually the best
- overusing signs that are culturally inappropriate
- using too few current Auslan fillers



- voicing or mouthing English words
- not structuring responses well
- using incorrect role-shifting and inappropriate body shifts
- using too many classifiers in some formal presentations, which were more appropriate for informal signing
- not using eye gaze and anaphoric indexing correctly
- not sequencing ideas or information and repeating the same ideas in responses.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section I: Watching and responding to informal signed texts

The use of the term ‘informal signed texts’ refers to spontaneous communication – that which is not normally recorded.

Description

Section 1 is designed primarily to assess the knowledge and skill in analysing and responding to information from informal signed texts in relation to one or more of the prescribed themes.

The student will observe an informal signed discourse. This signed discourse will be a DVD-recorded performance. The duration of this signed discourse will be five–seven minutes. The student will have an opportunity to observe this performance three times. There will be a two-minute pause between each performance when the student may take notes.

The student will be expected to respond in Auslan to a set task; for example, responding to a message or an announcement. The length of the response will be two–three minutes.

The questions will be available to the student on DVD in Auslan and written in English in the examination booklet.

Some students

- continued to take on the wrong role-play, and continued being themselves
- ignored the task
- did not use the information on the DVD
- produced a statement and failed to engage the audience
- did not produce an appropriate informal introduction, as required, but commenced with a formal introduction
- failed to have the correct structure
 1. greeting/opening
 2. body of discussion
 3. closure of discussion/parting/arranging another meeting, etc.

Criteria

Students must have a clear understanding of the criteria for this task, and what they are being assessed on.

When assessing performance in this section, the assessor will take into account the extent and depth to which the student demonstrates the criteria.

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Criteria	Explanation
1. The capacity to understand and respond to general and/or specific aspects of informal signed texts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying and analysing information effectively for the context, audience and purpose of task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> includes all main points on DVD (where, who, what involved) and uses them to present ideas registered to correct person (audience) answers questions/tasks uses appropriate language (register) (context)
2. The capacity to convey information accurately and appropriately <ul style="list-style-type: none"> comparing/contrasting/summarising/evaluating observation of cultural conventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contrasting two or more different views using the information fully to present ideas (not listing or straight description of DVD) to answer the question correct use of cultural conventions (e.g. introduction, opening, closing) correction of mistakes behaviours pragmatics
3. Relevance, breadth and depth of treatment of information, opinions, comment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> quality of content in relation to task/s set observation of cultural/discourse conventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discourse structure, appropriate (right) e.g. conversation/lecture/argument deep, not surface, treatment of ideas really interesting/included relevant and linked ideas
4. Accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammatical structures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accuracy of vocabulary and grammatical structures variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> correct and appropriate use of vocabulary; linguistic structure (e.g. classifiers, topicalisation, time number, etc.) use of metaphor/idiom language flows, easy to follow (clear) wide range of vocabulary and structure visual appropriateness use of fingerspelling grammar and emotions, facial expression no use of English structure instead of Auslan
5. The capacity to extract, classify and reorganise information from a range of informal signed texts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective structuring and sequencing of ideas for the context, audience and purpose of task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> coherent/interesting accurate deaf signing – work as a whole understood/linked

Section II: Watching and responding to formal signed texts

The use of the term ‘formal’ here refers to a communicative act prepared prior to presentation.

Description

Section II is designed primarily to assess the students’ knowledge and skill in analysing and responding to information from formally signed texts.

Students’ responses had a similar pattern to the informal responses, although they generally understood the nature of formal discourse and more students set up the introduction, main body and closures better.

Students need to practise extracting, classifying or reorganising in order to complete the task effectively.

Students also need to read the questions carefully.

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Criteria

Students must have a clear understanding of the criteria being used to assess them in this task.

When assessing performance in this section, the assessors will take into account the extent to which the students demonstrate the following.

Criteria	Explanation
1. The capacity to understand and respond to general and/or specific aspects of formal signed texts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying and analysing information effectively for the context, audience and purpose of task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> includes all main points on DVD (where, who, what involved) and uses them to present ideas (restricted) to correct person (audience) answers questions/tasks uses appropriate language (register, context)
2. The capacity to convey information accurately and appropriately <ul style="list-style-type: none"> comparing/contrasting/summarising/evaluating observation of cultural/discourse conventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contrasts two or more different views uses the information fully to present ideas (not listing or straight description of video) to answer the question correct use of cultural conventions (e.g. introduction, opening, closing) correction of mistakes behaviours pragmatics
3. Relevance, breadth and depth of treatment of information, opinions, comment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> quality of content in relation to task/s set 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discourse structure, appropriate (right), e.g. conversation/lecture/argument deep, not surface, treatment of ideas really interesting/included relevant and linked ideas
4. Accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammatical structures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accuracy of vocabulary and grammatical structures variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> correct and appropriate use of vocabulary; linguistic structure (e.g. classifiers, time markers, role shift) use of metaphor/idiom language flows, easy to follow (clear) wide range of vocabulary and structure visual appropriateness use of fingerspelling grammar and emotions, facial expression no use of English structure instead of Auslan
5. The capacity to extract, classify and reorganise information from a range of formal signed texts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective structuring and sequencing of ideas for the context, audience and purpose of task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> coherent/interesting accurate deaf signing – work as a whole understood/linked