

TBA SAMPLE TEST

Candidates: *Students of Environmental Sciences*

Language: *English*

Level: *B2*

Test structure:

- *Receptive skills (120 minutes);*
- *Independent study of the case file (individual and in pairs; 60 minutes);*
- *Oral part (in pairs; 20-30 minutes);*
- *Written part (individual; 90 minutes).*

ORAL PART

Task

A student radio station invited you (students of environmental studies) to talk about the BP oil spill. Work with your classmate and prepare to do the following:

- Present the problem from different viewpoints by taking into account the different sources and authors of the texts in your case file.
- Present your opinion(s) about the main arguments that the authors of the texts use to support their claims.
- Decide on the best short- term and long-term solutions to the problem.

The examiner will play the role of the radio presenter.

Case file

Reading:

- <http://www.bp.com/genericarticle.do?categoryId=2012968&contentId=7061712>
- http://www.ips-dc.org/articles/moving_our_nation_beyond_petroleum
- <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/apr/09/ecocide-crime-genocide-un-environmental-damage>

Listening:

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P8HT05yV-P8>
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Kj_m5mmpJo

(The above texts were last accessed January 20th, 2011.)

Comments on the oral part

The examiner:

- plays the role of the radio presenter;
- may use examiner's notes;
- asks clarification questions;
- maintains the focus on the topic.

Case file texts:

- consist of three articles and two videos from different sources: a broadsheet newspaper, the company responsible for the disaster, an environmental NGO, president Obama, TV network).

Considering the background of the candidates, a more technical article would be a welcome addition to the case file.

Assessment:

- task completion (presentation of relevant arguments, consideration of the different sources, evaluation of arguments, solution);
- language (style, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation).

Other things to consider:

- time constraints (are there too many texts available?);
- knowledge of the world (to an extent, students may use their previous knowledge of the topic to complete the task);
- the role of assessors (the extent of involvement, elicitation of desired content);
- discrete item testing (reading and listening comprehension tasks could be added to the test, if deemed necessary).

WRITTEN PART

Task

After the radio show, you feel that you did not have enough time to express all your opinions and ideas. You decide to write a blog entry on the possible ways of tackling or preventing oil spills.

In your blog entry of at least 250 words:

- Present and evaluate one of the ideas that you proposed during the show. Provide at least two arguments for it.
- Mention any new arguments that you did not have the chance to talk about during the programme.

Comments on the written part

Assessment:

- task completion (presentation of the solution, evaluation of the solution, two arguments, new arguments), and
- language (style, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation).

In the written part, more emphasis could be placed on language than on task completion.

Other things to consider:

- What is our approach to the given word-limit (do we count the words or not)?
- How do we assess similar content twice (mistakes from the oral part could be repeated in the written part and consequently 'punished' twice)?
- Should the case file be available to the candidates during the written part of the exam?