

TELT November 2014 **Examiners' Report**

1. Introduction

103 candidates sat for the TELT November 2014 examination session. **82 candidates** were awarded Pass grades or higher. This is the equivalent of a very positive **79.6 %** pass rate compared to 52.5% of the candidates who sat the examination in March 2014.

The grades in detail are listed below:

10 Fail
11 Narrow Fail
67 Pass
15 Pass with merit

There were no requests for a revision of paper.

80 Oral Test sessions were held with the following results:

2 Absent
1 Fail
3 Narrow Fail
31 Pass
30 Pass with merit
15 Distinction

There was therefore a **95% pass rate** for the Oral session.

2. General Remarks

The TELT November 2014 session was the eighth sitting using the revised syllabus and followed rigorously the format, recommendations and sample sections therein. The team of examiners once again agreed that the use throughout the paper of the exact rubric suggested in the new syllabus document benefitted the majority of the candidates in that it eliminated doubts as to what was exactly required of them in any given part of the paper.

The examiners are pleased to confirm that as the good overall results show, the majority of the candidates, i.e. 79.6%, were well-prepared and/or performed (very) well for this TELT examination session.

3. Section Analysis

Part 1 Language Description, Sensitivity and Awareness

Part 1 Section A – Language Terminology

The November 2014 candidates performed, well as in previous exam sessions, in this section – a section for which candidates are able to study and prepare themselves adequately. The average mark was just above 31/40 indicating a good 78% in this important area.

Generally, candidates demonstrated that they can cope adequately with this section though a few lost marks as they clearly demonstrated problems with basic terminology like, for example, *names of tenses*, *auxiliary verbs* and *definite and indefinite articles*.

Part 1 Section B – Primary Stress Identification

Part 1 Section C– Transcription of Phonemic Script into Normal Spelling

Part 1 Section D – Transcription into Phonemic Script

The March 2014 candidates registered a poor performance in the phonology sections (56%). This was thankfully improved this time round as the overall percentage that emerges in this exam session is just below an acceptable 72%. Candidates performed very well in Section C (90%), and well in Section B with a 74% rate (although marks were again lost due to inaccurate spelling). However, as usual, **Section D – Transcription into Phonemic Script** comes out as the most challenging examination task for TELT candidates with a rather disappointing 53%. Once again, examiners noticed that candidates shy away from this very useful classroom tool with a small number of them again not scoring any marks in Section D or actually leaving it out altogether.

The examiners' feel that, once again, they have to reiterate their conviction with exam preparation centres regarding the importance of teaching pronunciation and using the phonemic script as an important teaching aid in the classroom.

Part 1 Section E – Odd One Out

The average mark was just above 17/30 indicating a narrow pass rate at 58% for this task.

Generally, candidate knowledge was strong in areas of the Possessive 's'; the use of the Present Continuous to describe present activity versus irritating habits; and the Gerund.

Observations of candidates who struggled with this task are indicated below:

Those candidates who used the same answer as provided in the rubric had more chances of scoring highly as they covered all areas. A few candidates indicated which sentences they thought were the odd ones out without giving any explanations; in instances where they correctly identified the odd sentence, they scored a mark. Few candidates identified the past form of the words in bold in number 1 - most indicated it was the Past Simple form which was not true for most of the verbs. While many candidates identified the odd one out in number 3, most of them identified the words as being compound nouns and not compound words as they were not all nouns. Some candidates had difficulty with number 4 and the identification of coordinating and subordinating conjunctions. Quite a few candidates did not recognise the use of transitive and intransitive verbs in number 5. Many candidates thought the Future Perfect in most of the sentences in number 6 made up part of Conditional sentences. Candidate knowledge of direct and indirect object pronouns was on the weak side.

Candidates are once again reminded to focus on the words or phrases in bold and not the rest of the sentence when identifying conformity and contrast.

Part 2 Language Proficiency

Part 2 Section A – Identifying and Correcting Errors

The average mark was 13/20 indicating a satisfactory pass mark at 64% for this task.

Overall, candidate performance was just adequate in this area. A few candidates did not stick to the rubric and underline the error in the printed sentence. Some candidates did not identify the error in number 3 and focused on the second verb form in the sentence. The Imperative was not always recognised in number 4; however, some candidates inserted a modal verb which allowed the sentence to make sense and were given a mark. The spelling of easily confused words continues to be an obstacle for some students indicated by their inability to recognise the error in *peace/piece* in number 8 and *weather/whether* in number 11; some candidates wrongly identified *hers* to be the error in number 9, thinking it should be *here's*. Few candidates recognised the error in number 20; most thought that punctuation was the issue and those that did identify the tense being the error did not provide the correct tense.

Candidates are advised to stick to the rubric and write down only the correct word, phrase or punctuation in the space provided. Examiners have once again noticed that candidates who wrote the whole sentence, sometimes made spelling errors in other sections of the sentence, and although marks were not deducted for this, it indicated carelessness and overall poor performance.

Part 2 Section B – Word Formation

The average mark was just below 8/10 indicating a very satisfactory 84% pass mark for this task. However, the examiners' team noted once again that they were repeatedly constrained to deduct marks for careless spelling mistakes, notable with the words *inaudible*, *creations* and *pesticides*, in this section.

Part 2 Section C – Cloze Test – Selective Deletion

The average mark was just 4.5/10 indicating a very bleak and particularly low 47% average for this important task. In the cloze test section, candidates once again demonstrated clear and widespread difficulties with common English collocations. The Cloze Test continues to be the Achilles' heel for TELT examination candidates. The examiners reiterate that the only solution to this is that candidates should read more regularly, as well as expose themselves to and exploit more English language opportunities in their everyday activities.

Part 2 Section D – Sentence Transformation

The average mark was just above 14/20 this time round indicating an acceptable 72% pass mark for this task. However, a number of candidates sometimes came out with incorrect, and at times, 'creative' and very awkward sentence transformations especially in numbers 2, 3 and 8. Once again, marks were deducted as a result of careless spelling errors.

Part 2 Section E – Writing Section

The average percentage pass mark in this section, 72%, was marginally higher than that recorded in the March 2014 session which stood at 69%.

Overall, there seems to have been an improvement in the writing of the candidates. There was more attention to format with some text types such as reports and letters and there seemed to be better control of punctuation. There were a few cases where candidates only wrote one essay, leaving out the second essay entirely, resulting in a considerable loss of marks.

Candidates who did well were coherent with acceptable examples of collocation and clear flow of expression.

Candidates are encouraged to allow time for revision. Moreover, there were a few papers with handwriting that was barely legible. It needs to be reiterated that TELT Examination course providers would do well to emphasise that candidates should avoid presenting shoddy work and crossed out paragraphs, which is often evidence of bad planning and a certain degree of carelessness.

Candidates are therefore once again reminded that examiners have to read and understand the written tasks - clear handwriting is imperative.

4. The Speaking Test

A cursory look at the Speaking Tests results on page 1 reveals that while the Pass rate is relatively high at 80%, with no less than 15 candidates having been awarded a Distinction, 4 candidates actually failed the oral test.

The Narrow Fail and Fail candidates demonstrated difficulties in expounding ideas coherently, naturally and effortlessly, poverty in the range of lexis used, as well as an inability to process replies to interlocutors' prompts and questions in real time.

Examiners, however, had overall positive comments, and reported that the November 2014 'crop' of candidates were generally very well prepared for the Speaking Test.

5. Recommendations

Candidates and TELT preparation course providers are to be commended for their continued efforts to prepare well for this exam.

It is evident that more focus and attention still need to be given to phonology, in particular the phonemic script, and especially to increasing candidate familiarity with collocations in English, two areas which continue to present real problems to most candidates.