

# ESOL STEP 1 AND STEP 2 AWARDS IN SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Specifications from August 2019



**WHAT'S CHANGED?**

These updated specifications replace the 'from 1 January 2011' version. All exam content remains exactly the same.

# ESOL STEP 1 AND STEP 2 AWARDS IN SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Specifications from August 2019

Trinity College London  
[trinitycollege.com](http://trinitycollege.com)

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Trinity College London accepts entries for its exams on the condition that candidates conform to the requirements of the appropriate specifications. Any amendments to the requirements will be published on our website and in reprints of the document.

# Welcome

Welcome to Trinity College London's specifications for Step qualifications. Step 1 and Step 2 are initial speaking and listening qualifications for adults, providing students with the opportunity to mark learning progression while they build up the skills and confidence needed to take an ESOL Skills for Life qualification.

These specifications outline the core information that teachers and students need to prepare for their exams. Further guidance and support resources, including sample videos are available at [trinitycollege.com/Steps](https://trinitycollege.com/Steps)

## ABOUT TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON

Trinity College London is a leading international exam board and independent education charity that has been providing assessments around the world since 1877. We specialise in the assessment of communicative and performance skills covering music, drama, combined arts and English language. With over 850,000 candidates a year in more than 60 countries worldwide, Trinity qualifications are specifically designed to help students progress. Our aim is to inspire teachers and candidates through the creation of assessments that are enjoyable to prepare for, rewarding to teach and that develop the skills needed in real life.

At the heart of Trinity's work is the belief that effective communicative and performance skills are life enhancing, know no boundaries and should be within reach of us all. We exist to promote and foster the best possible communicative and performance skills through assessment, content and training that is innovative, personal and authentic.

## WHY CHOOSE TRINITY?

Teachers and students choose Trinity because:

- ▶ We understand the transformative power of performance
- ▶ Our qualifications help ensure candidates make progress by providing carefully levelled stepping stones that build confidence and enjoyment while continuing to extend and challenge
- ▶ We aim to design assessments that have a positive impact on student learning, engagement and achievement
- ▶ We encourage candidates to bring their own choices and interests into our exams – this motivates students and makes the assessment more relevant and enjoyable
- ▶ Our flexible exams give candidates the opportunity to perform to their strengths and interests
- ▶ Our qualifications are accessible to candidates of all ages and from all cultures
- ▶ Our highly qualified and friendly examiners are trained to put candidates at their ease and provide maximum encouragement

# Introduction to Trinity's Step 1 and Step 2 qualifications

## OBJECTIVE OF THE QUALIFICATIONS

Trinity's Step exams provide adults studying ESOL in the UK with the opportunity to demonstrate their speaking and listening skills in a face-to-face exam. They are pre-Entry level qualifications that can lead into ESOL Skills for Life exams.

## LEVEL OF THE QUALIFICATIONS

Step 1      pre-Entry level

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Step 2      pre-Entry level

## WHO THE QUALIFICATIONS ARE FOR

Step exams are for adults aged 16 and over. There is no requirement to have previous ESOL qualifications or to be able to read or write English. We are committed to making our exams accessible to all, and each candidate is treated individually when considering how assessments can be adapted for those with special needs. Find out more at [trinitycollege.com/language-csn](http://trinitycollege.com/language-csn)

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

### Recording of exams

Trinity audio records all exams. All recording devices are discreet and should not cause any distraction to candidates.

### Examiners

Each Step exam is conducted in person by a Trinity examiner. The exam consists of an unscripted one-to-one conversation with the examiner. Step examiners are trained to elicit the candidate's best performance and are standardised annually.

## WHERE THE QUALIFICATIONS COULD LEAD

These qualifications are designed to aid progression and access into mainstream education and employment paths where English language skills are a requirement.

They can also lead into Trinity's ESOL Skills for Life Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening exams, which are available at Entry 1 to Level 2.

## OTHER QUALIFICATIONS OFFERED BY TRINITY

- ▶ ESOL Skills for Life
- ▶ Graded Examinations in Spoken English (GESE)
- ▶ Integrated Skills in English (ISE)
- ▶ Grades, certificates and diplomas in drama
- ▶ Grades, certificates and diplomas in music
- ▶ Arts Award

Specifications for all these qualifications can be downloaded from [trinitycollege.com](http://trinitycollege.com)

# Step 1 and Step 2 overview

## CANDIDATE PROFILE

A candidate who has achieved Step 1 or Step 2 can:

- ▶ Understand what is said clearly, slowly and directly in simple everyday conversation with support
- ▶ Communicate simple information on familiar matters
- ▶ Use basic sentence patterns, simple phrases, groups of a few words and formulae about themselves, places and other people

## EXAM FORMAT

The exam at both levels consists of the following:

- ▶ Greetings and setting at ease
- ▶ Conversation
- ▶ End of conversation and leave-taking

## EXAM PROCEDURE

- ▶ The examiner begins by greeting the candidate and trying to set him or her at ease.
- ▶ The conversation is then initiated by the examiner who gives the candidate the opportunity to demonstrate the range of language required at this stage both through speech and actions.
- ▶ During the conversation, the candidate is required to display understanding through gesture and simple actions, such as moving or pointing to specific objects, and by giving short responses.
- ▶ Examiners select materials appropriate to the candidate. These could include everyday objects and pictures which are used to engage the candidate's interest, elicit the language of the level and encourage the conversation to develop. The examiner may also refer to the immediate surroundings of the exam room or centre.
- ▶ The examiner brings the conversation to an end by thanking the candidate and saying goodbye. The candidate is expected to say goodbye.

## CANDIDATE ASSESSMENT

At both levels, the examiner assesses the candidate's performance by awarding a letter grade A, B, C or D. These levels can be classified as follows:

- A – Distinction (reflects an excellent performance)
- B – Merit (reflects a good performance)
- C – Pass (reflects a satisfactory performance)
- D – Fail (reflects an unsatisfactory performance).

The candidate's performance in the exam is measured by performance descriptors, which can be downloaded from [trinitycollege.com/Steps](http://trinitycollege.com/Steps)

## GUIDANCE

- ▶ At this early stage of learning, questions and answers play an important part in the conversation, but the examiner aims to enable the candidate to participate in an interaction within the linguistic limits set by the specifications.
- ▶ The examiner asks questions using the language requirements for the level. At Step 1 the candidate is expected to answer using the listed language requirements. At Step 2 the candidate is expected to answer using the language of the level as well as the items listed for Step 1.
- ▶ The examiner speaks slowly and clearly throughout and allows the candidate time to process what is heard and formulate a response.
- ▶ The examiner provides support in the form of repetition and rephrasing.
- ▶ Candidates should ask for repetition of anything they have not heard clearly or understood. Simple phrases such as '*Can you repeat that, please?*' or '*Sorry?*' are ideal for this purpose. However, overuse of such phrases will be taken as an indication that the candidate is having persistent difficulty understanding the examiner and this will affect the assessment grade.
- ▶ The candidate is expected to demonstrate their ability to use the communicative skills, language functions and language items listed for the exam. Therefore, those responsible for preparing candidates for the exam should ensure that candidates are completely familiar with the language items, understand their meaning and can use them accurately and appropriately.
- ▶ At **Step 1**, candidates are expected to answer the examiner's questions with very short, mostly one or two word responses as well as with gestures and actions.
- ▶ At **Step 2**, candidates are expected to answer the examiner's questions with basic phrases, very short responses or, if possible, full sentences.

### **STEP EXAM REPORT FORMS**

An individual Step exam report form is completed by the examiner immediately after the exam has taken place and before the next candidate enters the exam room.

The Step exam report form gives the following information:

- ▶ An assessment of the candidate's performance using a letter grade A, B, C or D
- ▶ An indication of the key area(s) where the candidate could make improvements (if applicable)
- ▶ An indication of the overall result of the exam stated simply as Pass or Fail

The Step exam report form provides an indication of the result of the exam. This is not a confirmed result and candidates achieving a pass level should await the arrival of the certificate before making any claims about the result of the exam.

The Step exam report forms for all Step 1 and Step 2 candidates are given to the centre representative at the end of the exam session. In the case of exam sessions lasting more than one day, the Step exam report forms are not issued until all the candidates have been examined.

A sample Step exam report form is provided on page 7.

### **MARKSHEETS**

In addition to the Step exam report forms, the examiner also completes a composite marksheet which is returned to Trinity's central office so the results can be entered onto Trinity Online. Marksheets are for Trinity College London's use only and cannot be issued to centres for reasons of data protection.

### **CERTIFICATES**

After the results are entered onto Trinity Online the overall result is checked and a certificate is generated if the candidate has achieved a pass level. The certificate states the level of pass as follows:

- ▶ Pass with Distinction
- ▶ Pass with Merit
- ▶ Pass

Certificates are sent to centres for distribution and are normally dispatched within four weeks of the exam session.

# Sample Step exam report form

**TRINITY**  
COLLEGE LONDON

## Examination report

(This is not a certificate)

**Fatima Abdula**

ESOL Step 1

Candidate number: 1-123456789

Centre: Any Centre (001)

Examination date: 01/02/XXXX

### ESOL Step 1

#### Task fulfilment

Conversation                      A            B            C            D

The above profile would indicate the following overall result: PASS

#### Key areas for improvement

Conversation                      CS             G             L             P

CS = Communicative skills; G = Grammar; L = Lexis; P = Phonology

The result on this examination report form is provisional and is confirmed by the issue of a certificate (or otherwise).

ID document seen:            Yes             No

Examiner signature: P. Smith

Date: 01/02/XXXX

# Step 1

## FORMAT

Total time: 5 minutes

The exam consists of one assessed phase:

- ▶ Conversation with the examiner (up to 5 minutes)

## CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE

The candidate is expected to demonstrate the following communicative skills and use the language items listed below.

## COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS

- ▶ Exchange greetings with the examiner
- ▶ Show understanding of simple instructions through appropriate actions
- ▶ Give very short answers to simple questions and requests for information

## LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

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### Functions

- ▶ Exchanging greetings
  - ▶ Identifying and naming items given in the lexical list below
  - ▶ Leave-taking
- 

### Grammar

The candidate is expected to demonstrate the ability to:

#### a) Understand

- ▶ Imperatives for common actions, eg *open, close, tell me, give, point to, touch, show me*
- ▶ Question words *what? how many? how old?*
- ▶ Demonstratives *this, that*

#### b) Understand and use

- ▶ The present simple tense of *to be*
  - ▶ Common nouns in singular and plural (regular), eg *ear/ears, shoe/shoes, foot/feet*
  - ▶ Simple adjectives, eg *small, big, green*
  - ▶ Determiners *a, the, my, your, his, her, its, their*
  - ▶ Pronouns *I, you, he, she, it, they*
- 

### Lexis

The candidate is expected to demonstrate the ability to **understand and use** vocabulary related to:

- ▶ Greetings
  - ▶ Immediate surroundings including classroom objects
  - ▶ Parts of the face and body
  - ▶ Cardinal numbers up to 20
  - ▶ Colours
  - ▶ Items of clothing
  - ▶ Money
- 

### Phonology

- ▶ The correct pronunciation of individual sounds to form intelligible words

**EXAMINER AND CANDIDATE LANGUAGE**

The sample exchanges below show some ways in which examiners and candidates might express themselves during the conversation. **These are only examples, not models to be learned.**

<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Candidate</b>
<i>Hello! My name's ___. What's your name?</i>	<i>Hello. My name's ___.</i>
<i>What's this?</i>	<i>A chair.</i>
<i>Give me the book, please.</i>	(Candidate performs the required action.)
<i>Open/close the book.</i>	(Candidate performs the required action.)
<i>Point to the small key.</i>	(Candidate performs the required action.)
<i>What are they?</i>	<i>Pencils.</i>
<i>What colour's that?</i>	<i>Green.</i>
<i>And this one?</i>	<i>Brown.</i>
<i>How many pencils are on the table?</i>	<i>Five.</i>
<i>What's this?</i>	<i>10p.</i>
<i>Show me his ears.</i>	(Candidate performs the required action.)
<i>And what's this?</i>	<i>Your nose.</i>
<i>Look at me. My blouse is red and my trousers are black. And you?</i>	<i>A brown jacket and white trousers.</i>
<i>Thank you. Goodbye.</i>	<i>Goodbye.</i>

# Step 2

## FORMAT

Total time: 6 minutes

The exam consists of one assessed phase:

- ▶ Conversation with the examiner (up to 6 minutes).

## CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE

In addition to the items listed for the previous level, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following communicative skills and use the language items listed below.

## COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS

- ▶ Understand and respond to short, simple questions and requests
- ▶ Respond with appropriate actions and positive and negative short form answers
- ▶ Use a range of basic words and simple phrases related to personal details and situations

## LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

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### Functions

- ▶ Indicating the position of people and objects
  - ▶ Describing people, objects and places very simply
  - ▶ Stating simple facts
- 

### Grammar

The candidate is expected to demonstrate the ability to:

#### a) Understand

- ▶ Present simple tense questions
- ▶ Question words *who? where? when? which? how?*
- ▶ Present continuous tense questions
- ▶ Determiners *some, any*

#### b) Understand and use

- ▶ Present simple tense
  - ▶ *There is/are* and *has/have got*
  - ▶ Yes/no answers to present continuous tense questions
  - ▶ Prepositions of place *in/on/under/between/next to*
- 

### Lexis

The candidate is expected to demonstrate the ability to **understand and use** vocabulary related to:

- ▶ Rooms in the home
  - ▶ Household objects
  - ▶ Family and friends
  - ▶ Days of the week and months of the year
  - ▶ Cardinal numbers up to 50
  - ▶ Transport
- 

### Phonology

- ▶ The correct pronunciation of items associated with the lexical areas listed above
- ▶ Contractions, eg *I've, I'm, he's*

**EXAMINER AND CANDIDATE LANGUAGE**

The sample exchanges below show some ways in which examiners and candidates might express themselves during the conversation. **These are only examples, not models to be learned.**

**Examiner**

*Hello. Where do you come from?*

*How many people are there in your family?*

*How old is your brother?*

*At home, in which room do you cook/make food?*

*What do you have for breakfast?*

*Where do you sleep?*

*Where's the van?*

*What's the man riding?*

*Have you got a car?*

*Is there a key on the table?*

*What day is it today?*

*And the month?*

*Thank you. Goodbye.*

**Candidate**

*Hello! I come from Iraq.*

*(There are) four people.*

*He's 34.*

*The kitchen.*

*Toast.*

*In the bedroom.*

*Between the (two) cars.*

*A motorbike.*

*No, I haven't.*

*Yes, there is.*

*It's Monday.*

*June.*

*Goodbye.*

# Policies

## **SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION**

Trinity is fully committed to safeguarding and protecting the candidates that we work with. All posts, including examiners, are subject to a safer recruitment process, including the disclosure of criminal records and vetting checks. Our safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and promote safeguarding and safer working practice across all parts of our work.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Trinity is committed to providing equality of opportunity and treatment for all, and will not unlawfully or unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly on the basis of any characteristic.

## **REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT**

Trinity is committed to creating an inclusive environment where candidates with special needs are able to demonstrate their skills and feel welcomed. We aim to make our exams accessible to all. We treat each learner individually when considering how we can achieve this aim, recognising that requirements vary. Candidates can be assured that we do not compromise on the standard of marking or allow the quality of exams to be affected in any way.

All provision is tailored to the particular needs of each candidate. In order to be most beneficial, as full an explanation as possible of the required provision should be given. The need and request for provision should be made on the appropriate form available to download from [trinitycollege.com/language-csn](http://trinitycollege.com/language-csn). For enquiries please contact [language-csn@trinitycollege.com](mailto:language-csn@trinitycollege.com)

## **DATA PROTECTION**

Trinity is registered as a Data Controller with the Information Commissioner's Office in the United Kingdom under data protection legislation. Please see [trinitycollege.com/data-protection](http://trinitycollege.com/data-protection) for the most up-to-date information about Trinity's data protection procedures and policies.

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE**

Trinity is committed to providing a high-quality service for all our users from initial enquiry through to certification. Full details of our customer service commitment can be found at [trinitycollege.com/customer-service](http://trinitycollege.com/customer-service)

## **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

Please note that, for training/monitoring purposes, it may, on occasion, be necessary for there to be more than one examiner in the room.

Trinity audio records and sometimes films exams for quality assurance and training purposes. In the case of filming, Trinity will always seek permission from the candidate (or a parent or guardian) first. All recording devices will be discreet and should not cause any distraction to candidates.

## **MALPRACTICE**

Trinity requires its registered exam centres to report any suspected malpractice by candidates, teachers or examiners. In situations where a centre is found to be inadequate or to be guilty of malpractice, either in terms of provision of facilities or in administration, the exam centre may be required to suspend all of its activities relating to Trinity exams until the cause of the problem is identified and rectified, if appropriate. In extreme circumstances, the centre may have its registered status withdrawn.

In the very rare cases or circumstances where a centre or individual may be suspected of malpractice, Trinity will aim to minimise any inconvenience caused to any affected candidate, and would like to thank candidates, teachers and centre staff for their kind co-operation in reporting any suspected incident of cheating, thereby assisting Trinity in upholding the quality and integrity of its exam process.

## **RESULTS REVIEW AND APPEALS PROCEDURE**

Anyone who wishes to question their exam result should refer to [trinitycollege.com/results-enquiry](http://trinitycollege.com/results-enquiry) for full details of our results review and appeals process.