

Exploring Skills for English Tests

Listening Part 1: C1 and C2

Format of the task

There are three parts to the C1 and C2 Listening tests. In **Part 1**, candidates will listen to 5 short recordings, which may be a dialogue or a monologue and answer two three-option multiple choice questions (MCQs) for each recording (approximately between 200-250 words at C1 and 250-300 at C2 level). Topics will be on everyday life contexts and appropriate to C1 and C2 levels.

Questions in this part consist of 2 x 3-option MCQs for each recording. The focus of these questions will be on detailed understanding, gist, attitudes and opinions, inferred meaning for example. Candidates will need to answer the questions as they listen.

Candidates will have time to read and check their answers. All audio recordings and questions are at C1 and C2 level and each recording will be played twice.

Skills/functions being assessed

- Detailed understanding, gist, attitudes and opinions and inferred meaning
- Identifying attitudes of speakers
- Extracting specific information

Tips for teachers

Provide candidates with:

- Practice in listening to a variety of recordings to identify the main gist
- Skills to understand how informal and formal dialogues are organised including how feelings, opinions and information is conveyed
- Strategies to identify the main points from the vocabulary used
- Skills to be able to understand unfamiliar and inferred words through context

Tips for learners

- In preparation, listen to a wide variety of audio recordings in English as you can
- Read the questions carefully before listening, note key words their position in the recordings
- Use the second listening to check your answers as some answers could be implied
- Practise using cues in the text to help you identify meanings of words/phrases you don't know.
- Prepare by using the online Skills for English (SfE) practice tests

Sample C1/C2 Listening Part 1 Task

The extract below is an example of the type of dialogue and questions a candidate may encounter in Part 1.

Speaker 1	Message received Wednesday at 11.07.
Speaker 2	<p>Hello Mr Johnson,</p> <p>This is Larson's Garage calling regarding your MOT check. I am afraid your car has failed the test on a number of issues and these'll need to be rectified. As you will be aware it's illegal to drive a car without a MOT. I know you were keen to keep costs down so I'll be frank with you.</p> <p>First of all, your front right indicator isn't working and will need to be replaced. Also, the tread on the two front tyres is well below the legal limit, so you'll have to get those changed. I've got a couple of possible options for you. I can do two tyres for £180 which is a great deal, but to be absolutely honest you'll be better off going for the premium tyres for £250... all in, with labour charges and VAT, that would be £350 for the premium or £70 less for the first option.</p> <p>Now, that doesn't include the cost of the MOT test which is another £35, but just to let you know that we have also got a smashing deal on this month. If you have a full service, we can do it all for £100 inclusive of MOT. That's the one I would go for!</p> <p>No pressure, it's entirely up to you but let me know as soon as possible so we can book you in. I am absolutely snowed under so the quicker you get back to me the better. The garage shuts at 5:30 this evening, if you don't want to go ahead you need to come and pick it up by then. Thanks, bye.</p>

Always read the questions before listening.

If you are not sure of the meaning of a word, try to infer meaning from the context of the conversation. We can see that an 'MOT' must mean a car test because the (car) garage has called Mr Johnson about failing a test.

1. The garage is calling Mr Johnson because it wants to...

- a. give information on special offers.
- b. give quotes on repairs.
- c. give advice on MOT.

You will hear the recordings twice.

All of the options do appear in the text but only one relates to the question. The **green highlighted texts** show the correct answers and the **yellow highlighted texts** show the wrong answers.

2. What manner would best describe the attitude of the caller?

- a. The caller was polite but critical.
- b. The caller was friendly but assertive.
- c. The caller was informative but pushy.

(2) C is incorrect because: The caller was informative (a lot of information was given about pricing and various discounts), but he was not "pushy" (pressure someone into buying something).

(2) A is incorrect because: The caller was polite: "I am afraid", "As you will be aware" but was NOT critical.

(2) B Assertive comments: "you'll have to get those changed", "That's the one I would go for!" and "if you don't want to go ahead you need to come and pick it up by then".

Friendly comments: "I know you were keen to keep costs down", "to be absolutely honest you'll be better off", "but just to let you know" and "No pressure".

Answers:

- 1. b
- 2. b

Note: this sample task is for guidance purposes only. For examples of level-specific listening tasks, please refer to the Skills for English Practice Tests available through the Skills for English website: <https://skillsforenglish.com/language-learning/>