

TELT March 2023 Examiners' Report

1. Introduction

19 candidates sat for the TELT March 2023 examination session. 15 candidates were awarded Pass grades or higher. This is the equivalent of a 78.9% pass rate.

The grades for the written paper are listed below:

- 0 Distinction
- 5 Pass with Merit
- 10 Pass
- 3 Narrow Fail
- 1 Fail
- 0 Unclassified

2. General Remarks

Candidate performance in the March 2023 TELT session was very satisfactory when compared to recent sessions. The Writing Section was very satisfactory in this examination session with an average mark reaching 75%. Many candidates demonstrated a good control of language and familiarity with idiomatic expressions and turn of phrase. In this section, a certain inattention to essay format as dictated by genre and, especially, paragraphing were also evident, and this resulted in loss of marks. As in past TELT examinations, the presentation of many essays, moreover, left much to be desired.

3. Section Analysis

Part 1 Language Description, Sensitivity and Awareness

Part 1 Section A – Language Terminology

Candidates fared adequately in Section A Part 1 where the average pass mark reached a satisfactory 71%. The general impression is that many candidates were well prepared and demonstrated a fair to good knowledge of grammar and language terms.

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

Candidate performance ranged from satisfactory in the Word Stress Section B with an average mark of 68%, to very strong in Section C, average mark of 86%. A number of candidates lost marks for spelling errors in Section C. However, candidates overall showed dexterity in recognizing items in phonemic script and were able to change them to normal spelling. The fact that candidates can generally recognise primary word stress and easily decipher words transcribed phonemically was, again, counterbalanced by a poor performance in Section D with an average mark of just 42%.

As many as 9 candidates either ignored this section completely or performed very poorly. Much better preparation for and familiarization with the IPA and transcription is required for this section.

Part 1 Section E –Candidate performance in this section could be considered disappointing with an average mark registering only 63%. The examiners noticed that the main problem here lies in the fact that many of the candidates did not follow the rubric carefully and did not identify all the three distinct strands: identifying the odd one out; specifying what all the items in bold had in common; and why the odd one out was different to the others. Marks were therefore lost by many candidates who presented only part of the answer.

A number of candidates showed a lack of preparation for this section by not even hazarding a guess where they were not sure of the answer.

Part 2 Language Proficiency

Part 2 Section A – Identifying and Correcting Errors

Part 2 Section In spite of the fact that this section always turns out to be rather challenging for candidates, the average pass mark this time round reached was a very satisfactory 74%. Errors had to do with failing to identify and correct errors, with a lack of familiarity with certain collocations, word formation, and word choice. Some candidates wrongly identified errors in sentences where there were none, and marked as ‘correct’, ones that included one

Examiners encourage examination preparation trainers to remind candidates to closely follow the rubric in this section: identify the error by underlining the target error and writing ONLY the corrected word(s). A good number of candidates failed to follow this instruction.

Part 2 Section B – Word Formation

In this section, candidates averaged a high average mark of 83%. Valuable marks were, however, lost due to poor spelling.

Part 2 Section C – Cloze Test – Selective Deletion

Performance in this task was good with an average mark of 71%. As is always the case, candidates who came up with plausible lexical options gained marks. Examiners believe that candidates who read regularly and broaden their range of collocation and commonly used phrases would generally stand a better chance of performing well in this challenging section. Examination preparation trainers would do well to to emphasise and remind candidates of the importance of this concept.

Part 2 Section D – Sentence Transformation

Candidates registered a strong 78% average pass mark. Marks were lost mostly due to errors in phrase construction, word order, collocation and, again, misspelt words.

Part 2 Section E – Writing Section

Performance in this section was very satisfactory with an average pass mark of 75%. A few essays were exceptionally well-written; a few others clearly less so in terms of language range and control as well as presentation. A number of candidates failed to produce responses with an acceptable format and register depending on the task type. There were some instances of weakness with and/or complete lack of paragraph structure. As usual, marks were deducted for poor spelling, awkward sentence construction, weak control of structure, and poor text cohesion.

Candidates are advised to plan what to write and revise their written text, making any necessary edits before handing the paper in. Moreover, even though candidates are writing under examination conditions, they should still pay some attention to presentation of their work.

4. Recommendations

As with previous reports, more focus and attention to phonology, in particular, the transcription of the phonemic script, is encouraged and recommended. The lack of familiarity with the phonemic script remains a matter of serious concern. Examiners have regularly reported that a number of candidates in every examination session simply ignore this important area. Examiners feel that this continues to arise from the fact that candidates fail to recognise its usefulness in and out of class for their learners, especially with a view of reinforcing learner autonomy. This is an area that trainers should strive to address much more forcibly in their TELT Preparation courses.

The necessity to avoid instances of incorrect spelling and the use of correct combinations of collocation also need to be impressed upon candidates.

Trainers are encouraged to provide candidates with opportunities to improve their writing skills in the various text genres and their respective writing conventions. Correct punctuation and conventions for paragraphing, in particular, should also be explicitly focused on.

Lastly, candidates should be reminded of the importance of regular quality reading practice as this will increase their exposure to modern English and serve as a valuable model for their own writing as well as a means by which candidates broaden their range of lexis and structures, as well as their creativity, an aspect which, it is noted, was rather poor in this examination session.