Tea Project
SINCE 2016
TEACHING IN ENGLISH FOR ACADEMICS
ULB

6
THE LANGUAGE OF EXAMS
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6.1 ORGANISING THE EXAM

- Come in. Take a seat.
- Tell me about...
- Can you please give me your full name?
- Now, I’m going to give you a topic.
- Can I see your identification please?
- You will lose marks if you (...).
- Pick a question at random.
- I will deduct marks if you (...).
- You have 30 minutes to prepare and then I will ask you questions.
- I will deduct 3 points for each day your work is late / for each day beyond the deadline.
- You will present and explain your answer and then we will discuss it.
6.2 ASKING QUESTIONS IN AN EXAM

△ Can you describe/explain/identify...?

△ What are the main advantages and disadvantages of...?

△ Can you tell me how/why/whether...?

△ What can you tell me about...?

△ Can you point out the most important features of...?

△ What are the main differences between (...) and (...)?

△ Given what you know about (...), can you explain...?

△ What are the other hypotheses you might give to account for [the change in climate]?

△ What is the value of...?

△ What are the consequences for/of...?
6.3 Getting the Student to Expand

- This is partially correct.
- Can you give me some more detail?
- Can you explain your reasoning?
- Can you elaborate on this?
- Try to be more precise in the way you answer the question.
- What experiments / evidence support this?
- Try to draw on / use what we have learned in the class to elaborate your answer?
- Can you give me an example that illustrates your point?
- Have you forgotten something?
- Are you sure you’ve covered all the main points?
- On the basis of what you have just said, could you identify...?
- Can you give me any other examples from the course which show the same principle / demonstrate the same notions?
- Try to use what we have learnt in the class to elaborate your answer.
6.4 ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION/REPEITION

- What do you mean by...?
- Could you give an example?
- How do you spell that?
- Could you repeat that?
- Sorry, what did you say?
- Would you explain that again for me?
6.5 GETTING THE STUDENT TO BE CONCISE

- Try to be more precise in the way you answer the question.
- What is the connection between (...) and (...)?
- Can you explain your point more clearly? I’m not sure I follow your thinking / reasoning / logic.
- Can you point out the most important feature(s) of...?
Focus on the main topic.

Can I just remind you that the question is about (...) and not (..)?

You answer is a bit off-topic.

There were two parts to the question. You forgot to answer the second part, which was about...

The theme you are talking about is more relevant to another part of the course.

That’s not quite / really the case.

That’s not quite / really true.

What can you tell me about...?
6.7 General Comments

- It depends.
- It might be, I suppose.
- In a way, perhaps.
- Sort of, yes.
- Not really.
- Unfortunately not.
- I’m afraid that’s not quite right.
- You can’t say that, I’m afraid.
- You can’t use that formula here.
- Good try, but not quite right.
- Not quite right.
- Your time is up.
6.8 ENCOURAGEMENT

- That’s more like it.
- That’s much better.
- That’s a lot better.
- You’ve improved a lot.
- Have another try.
- You were almost right.
- That’s almost it.
- You’re halfway there.
- You’ve almost got it.
- You’re on the right track.
- There’s no need to rush.
- There’s no hurry.
- We have plenty of time.
- Have another go.
- Try again.
- Have a guess.
6.9 Giving Grades

- You need 50% to pass the exam.
- You got 15 out of 20.
- The pass mark is 10 out of 20.
- You need ...% to get a merit / distinction.
- I will post the exam results on...

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**Remember!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To sit an exam</td>
<td>Passer un examen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To do an exam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To pass an exam</td>
<td>Réussir un examen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.10 CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

- You should have developed your analysis of point 2.
- You needed to give more detailed examples.
- Your work did not meet (my) expectations.
- Your work did not meet the standard required to pass.
- I can see that you have understood but it would have been better if you had used more technical terms.
- You needed to give more information.
- Your answers are not satisfactory / of sufficient depth / sufficiently complex.
- I’m sorry but there wasn’t enough relevant material in your answer.
- I was expecting you to give more information.
- Your answer is correct, but you have used up all of your exam time talking about a very basic concept.
- As far as I’m concerned, you’ve given an overview of the subject but it was too limited.
- I had to give you too much help.
- Your answers were not accurate / detailed / developed enough.
- You need to completely rewrite this paragraph / rephrase this sentence.
- This report contains some good ideas but the structure is not coherent / lacks coherence.