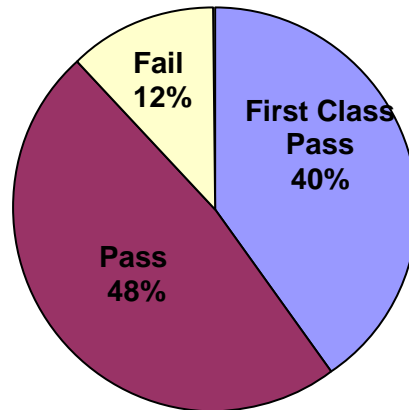


8984 International ESOL - Preliminary

General observations

Comparing the results to last year, the Fail rate has increased by a third with the thus obvious reduction in the overall number of passes. There is a slight increase in First Class Passes. One might expect the ratio at this first level to be a little more encouraging, with a higher proportion of First Class Passes. Candidates are generally doing well in the Listening and Reading compared to a poorer performance in Writing.

A1



Areas of good performance

Candidates are generally well prepared for the level in terms of the Reading and Listening, some getting full marks in Parts 1, 2 and 3 of these. They generally perform particularly well with the picture prompts in Listening 1. Writing Part 1 is normally well-executed and there have been significant improvements in the free writing produced for Writing Part 4.

Areas for development

Candidates are still tending to be weak in following the precise instructions given. They are losing marks by not doing exactly what is required. In the Writing, some are producing over the word length and that is not gaining them extra marks. Apart from some weaknesses in grammar and spelling, by far the most marks are lost by inattention to detail or misunderstanding the instructions.

Recommendations

Candidates need more actual examination preparation. They need to be familiar with what is required for each task e.g. put a circle around the correct answer; tick a certain number of boxes; correct the sentences. In Reading Part 1, candidates need to be told to read the whole paragraph before filling the boxes as the meaning is connected and should not be read as separate sentences. Candidates should practise similar tasks to Writing Part 2 i.e. correcting the required number and type of errors (5 punctuation: capital letters and full-stops) but NOT rewriting the text. For Writing Part 4, candidates need training in writing within the given word limit and including all the points stated in the question.

Tips

- Have frequent quizzes on instruction words such as tick and circle.
- Practise the vocabulary related to form-filling, including conventions associated with currency, titles, addresses etc.

- Write using normal upper and lower case (not all in capitals).
- Check that sentences are grammatically accurate e.g. include a verb in every sentence, check the use of articles, always use capital 'I' not 'i' for first person.

Additional comments

Candidates need more specific examination practice by using mock examinations. It should be stressed that time management is important as all questions must be answered. If candidates change an answer, they need to make it absolutely clear which answer they wish to have marked. Teachers need to ensure full skills practice in all the three skills tested here so that candidates are not disadvantaged in any one area.