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## OET 2.0 Speaking Test Format

Occupational English Test (OET) from September 2018 is going to be very different. Yes, if you are the one who is going to take this test then it is necessary that you shall get yourself more acquainted with the latest OET version.

### Is it going to be more difficult or much simpler?

It is hard to say but it has been updated with the view to make it more effective. Of course, assessment of all essential language skills such as listening, reading, writing and speaking has moved to the next best level. There are many changes in the new pattern of OET which are aimed at judging the required medical language skills in a more influential way.

### What is the big change in the test?

There are a plethora of changes in the way the paper is constructed. Writing sub-test has got no change but the other three sub-tests with respect to reading, listening and speaking has got a lot of changes. In fact, the evaluation process for the three sub-tests has also been updated which means the examiner will be applying new criteria to evaluate the papers.

### What is about new OET speaking sub-test?

The format of the test has not got changed but candidate's responses to a wide range of workplace communication-related questions will be assessed in a different way. Responses will be examined applying different principles. Overall communicative effectiveness (as it was there in the older version of the OET evaluation), has now been replaced with the new criterion that is clinical communication skills. Here, we have listed down clinical communication skills which the examiner might look for.

- Relationship building
- How well the medical professional understands the patient's perspective
- How good the medical professional is in creating a proper structure or communicating his or her ideas

### OET Speaking Sample Role Plays for Practice

OET Speaking subtest is considered to be one of the hardest tests to take as you will be required to speak face-to-face with the examiner. However, it is not that tough to score a 350 or more on this test. All you need to do is practice your speaking skills



well and follow the role play card duly. In this article, we will help you gain an understanding of how to ace this test by providing a nursing and medicine sample role play for your practice.

**Before moving forward, it is important to brush some of the basic points to follow while taking the speaking test. They are as follows:**

1. Make a dynamic introduction.
2. Enquire with relevant questions.
3. Avoid using negative language and focus on the positive.
4. Avoid speaking throughout the interview and let the communication flow.
5. Address all the points given in the role-playing card

### **Sample Role Play for Practice**

You will receive a role-play card to carry out the speaking test. This card will explain the situation and what you are required to do in the situation. You will be required to keep this card with you while doing the role play.

### **Nursing**

A sample for nursing role play card is as follows:

#### **Setting: Hospital**

Nurse: A 4-year old child has been brought to the hospital suffering from high fever, wheezing, and chest tightness. You have suspected the child to have asthma. You are the nurse required to take the child's vital and keep the parents from getting agitated and anxious while the child is waiting for the doctor.

#### **Task:**

- Explain to the parent that the doctor and emergency department are busy and a doctor will be right over to see the child.
- Ask the parents to brief you about the child's condition.
- Explain to the parents what they can expect from the doctor.
- Reassure the parent that you are doing everything in your power to take care of the child and let them know that a doctor will attend them shortly.
- Inform them that you need to continue taking the child's vitals.
- Help the parent to relax and allow you to attend to the child.

### **Medicine**



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A sample for medicine role play card is as follows:

## Setting: Clinic

Doctor: A 45-year-old patient is appearing for a check-up after suffering a mild heart attack two weeks ago. This patient was discharged from the hospital four days ago after recovering without any complications. However, the patient is now concerned about the long-term recovery process and fear that any physical activity can bring on another attack.

## Task:

- Ask the patient about his worries and assure him that lethargy and fatigue can be expected for the first few weeks.
- Explain to the patient the importance of exercises like low cholesterol, weight loss, strengthening of the heart, and much more.
- Recommend activities to prevent any future heart attack
- Advise the patient to join a cardiac rehabilitation center to increase physical tolerance under guidance.
- Assure the patient that his concerns are valid.

These sample role plays can help you with OET preparation

- How good the candidate is in collecting information from the patient or the client
- How good the candidates is in establishing what the patient might share or already know of.

The changes have been made after careful research, reviews, and focus on the requirements of what the present and future health care industry requires. Research from the university of Melbourne which provides necessary information on what matters the most to healthcare has been taken into consideration and the changes have been made in accordance to the research data. Here, the skills required are patient-centred care which every medical professional shall have and in the test, the same skills are evaluated. Candidates who are going to have such skills is going to gain higher score in the test for sure. It is important that the candidates shall play their role more naturally and respond to questions of the interview or ask interviewers the questions as needed so that the communication is two-way.

## Are you going to take OET?

Well, better be prepared for it first. Without enough preparation, it may not be easy for you to get through it. So, prepare yourself for it before you take it.



## About the Speaking Sub-test

The Speaking sub-test is delivered individually and takes around 20 minutes. This part of OET uses materials specifically designed for your profession. In each role-play, you take your professional role (for example, as a nurse or as a pharmacist) while the interlocutor plays a patient, a client, or a patient's relative or carer. For veterinary science, the interlocutor is the owner or carer of the animal.

## The Speaking sub-test structure

In each Speaking test, your identity and profession are checked by the interlocutor and there is a short warm-up conversation about your professional background. Then the role-plays are introduced one by one and you have three minutes to prepare for each. The role-plays take about five minutes each.

## Role-plays

You receive information for each role-play on a card that you keep while you do the role-play. The card explains the situation and what you are required to do. You may write notes on the card if you want. If you have any questions about the content of the role-play or how a role-play works, you can ask them during the preparation time.

The role-plays are based on typical workplace situations and reflect the demands made on a health professional in those situations. The interlocutor follows a script so that the Speaking test structure is similar for each candidate. The interlocutor also has detailed information to use in each role-play. Different role-plays are used for different candidates at the same test administration.

## How is speaking assessed in OET?

The whole Speaking sub-test is recorded and it is this audio recording that is assessed.

- The Speaking sub-test is marked independently by a minimum of two trained OET Assessors.
- Neither Assessor knows what scores the other has given you, or what scores you have achieved on any of the other sub-tests.
- Your test day interlocutor plays no role in the assessment of your performance.
- OET Assessors' judgement is targeted and specific, not a general evaluation of candidates' ability in spoken English.
- OET Assessors are trained to focus on how a candidate responds to the particular task on the day. They apply specific assessment criteria that reflect the demands of



communication in the health professional workplace. Remember that OET is a test of English-language skills, not a test of professional knowledge.

Candidates who are familiar with the assessment criteria and pay attention to the details of the specific role-play task have a better chance of demonstrating their ability in the key areas. Candidates who use memorized material or merely rely on techniques that worked in other circumstances tend not to perform to their full potential in the test.

Your performance on each of the two Speaking role-plays is scored against nine criteria and receives a band score for each criterion. The nine criteria are separated into two different segments: Linguistic and Clinical Communicative.

### **Linguistic Criteria:**

- **Intelligibility:** The impact of your pronunciation, intonation and accent on how clearly your listener can hear and understand what you're saying
- **Fluency:** The impact of the speed and smoothness of your speech on your listener's understanding
- **Appropriateness of Language:** The impact of your language, tone and professionalism on your listener's understanding and comfort
- **Resources of Grammar and Expression:** The impact of your level of grammatical accuracy and vocabulary choices on your listener's understanding.

### **Clinical Communication Criteria:**

- **Relationship-building:** The impact of your choice of opening to the conversation and demonstration of empathy and respect on your listener's comfort
- **Understanding and incorporating the patient's perspective:** The impact of how fully you involve the patient in the conversation on your listener's understanding and comfort.
- **Providing structure:** The impact of how you organize the information you provide and introduce new topics for discussion on your listener's understanding
- **Information-gathering:** The impact of the type of questions you ask and how you listen to the responses on your listener's understanding
- **Information-giving:** The impact of how you provide information and check this information is being understood on your listener's comfort and understanding.

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