

English Language Screening Aide

This table is only to be used as a guide and does not replace the actions that must be undertaken as described in the WSI guide.

You may wish to ask supplementary questions to gain a fuller answer. Further detailed examples can be found in the [ESOL levels table](#).

Example Questions	Example Responses	Interpretation	Next Steps
1) What was your last job?	a) Gives one word answer <i>e.g. "builder", "cleaner"</i>	a) Indicates below E1	Refer for in-depth provider assessment, and training (where appropriate)
2) What jobs have you applied for?	b) Gives longer answer <i>"I worked in factory."</i>	b) indicates below E2 as above	
3) Where have you looked for a job? (or Where are you looking for a job?)	c) Gives detailed answer <i>"I looked on-line and I applied for three jobs. I didn't hear yet."</i>	c) Unsatisfactory/incomplete answers with poor pronunciation and/or muddled incorrect English – indicates below entry level 2	
4) How many job applications have you made?		c) Satisfactory/complete answers with minor grammatical or pronunciation errors –indicates at level 2;	Consider other Skills needs/barriers to work
5) What kind of job would you like to do?		d) indicates E3 or above	

IN GENERAL:

- Use an open style of questioning as this will encourage a fuller answer and will help you with interpretation.
- If the claimant understands the question and replies with a one or two-word answer, prompt him/her with a follow up question. If s/he is unable to say more than one or two words, then s/he is clearly below Entry 2 - refer for assessment.
- If the claimant understands the question and replies with a longer answer, ask a follow up question. If the reply is longer but you find it very difficult to understand what s/he is saying, either because of pronunciation/accent or muddled/incorrect English, then s/he is probably at or below Entry 2 – refer for assessment.
- If the claimant gives a longer answer that you understand without difficulty, if s/he uses clear pronunciation and more accurate vocabulary/grammar, then s/he is probably above Entry 2.

English Language Screening Aide

Guidance for Work Coaches

Introduction

This guidance is designed for Work Coaches who are required to screen and identify claimants who may have English language needs at or below Entry 2 (E2) in **speaking** and **listening**. It has been designed with the aim of encouraging claimants to demonstrate what they can understand and say as far as possible, and should be used, where appropriate as part of the Work Search Review (Diagnostic). The results obtained are only an indication of probable level.

How can I identify if a claimant's Speaking/Listening skills are at or below Entry 2 (E2)?

Identifying an individual's language level is not an easy task for non-ESOL specialists. However, by reading the descriptions of the language expected at each level and examples of typical responses, you should start to become familiar with the language and levels.

In very general terms, an individual whose current skills level is at E1 is likely to struggle to understand English spoken at natural speed and will find it very difficult to express him/herself. Skills at E2, an individual will probably understand quite a lot of everyday English and will be able to communicate with simple language, although making quite a lot of mistakes with grammar and vocabulary. At E3, an individual can understand and communicate quite well in everyday situations and will have a wider vocabulary.

How do I screen for English Language skills needs?

1. Use the ESOL level descriptors to familiarise yourself with the levels. As part of your WSI discussion you may wish to refer to the English Language Screening Aide Questions Table ([Insert Link](#)), which refers to specific questions. Look at the comments and examples in the '**Possible responses/exemplars**' column to see which ones most closely match the claimant's responses. Look across to the '**Interpretation**' column and use your judgement to decide whether the claimant's responses are mostly a), b), c) or d). If they are mostly a), b) or c) ("**unsatisfactory answer**"), then refer for an in depth assessment.
2. If the claimant doesn't appear to understand a question straight away and/or doesn't reply, or replies with a wrong answer, repeat the question more slowly and **wait** for them to answer. Sometimes, people need to hear the same question again and have time to process it. If you have repeated the question and the claimant still doesn't appear to understand, try re-phrasing the question. For example, 'Where have you looked for a job?' could be re-phrased as 'Have you looked for a job?' If the claimant answers 'yes', then ask 'Where did you look? Which websites?'

In general:

- If the claimant understands the question and replies with a one or two-word answer, prompt him/her with a follow up question. If s/he is unable to say more than one or two words, then s/he is potentially below Entry 2 - refer for assessment.
- If the claimant understands the question and replies with a longer answer, ask a follow up question. If the reply is longer but you find it very difficult to understand what s/he is saying, either because of pronunciation/accent or muddled/incorrect English, then s/he is probably at or below Entry 2 – refer for assessment.
- If the claimant gives a longer answer that you understand without difficulty; if s/he uses clear pronunciation and more accurate vocabulary/grammar, then s/he is probably at or above Entry 2. In these cases, where it is considered that language skills may still be a barrier to the claimants moving into work, referral to a more in-depth assessment should be undertaken as existing business process.

Skills for Life ESOL (England and Wales)

Speaking and Listening language level indicators and examples

At pre-Entry level (ESOL with literacy needs)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At this level, a learner may or may not be able to say their name or understand a very simple question. They may have no or little literacy in their first language or English.• Gives a one word answer E.G <i>builder</i>, <i>'cleaner'</i>
At Entry level 1
<p>At this level, a learner is expected to understand simple requests, instructions and information and speak to communicate basic information on familiar topics. For example, the learner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• can answer questions about his/her name and address and where s/he is from• can understand and respond to requests such as 'sit here, please', 'have you got a pen?' 'Fill in this form, please'• can exchange greetings and answer simple questions, e.g. <i>'hello'</i>, <i>'goodbye'</i>, <i>'how are you?'</i>, <i>'thank you'</i>, <i>'sorry'</i>, <i>'I come from Pakistan'</i>• can say very simple sentences of 4/5 words but these are often ungrammatical, e.g. <i>'I long time live in London'</i>, <i>'I get bus come here'</i>, <i>'I want a job'</i>, <i>'how much it pay?'</i> <i>'I like cooking'</i> <i>I worked in factory'</i>, <i>'I applied three jobs but nothing'</i>• can ask for repetition and clarification, e.g. <i>'Can you repeat, please?'</i> <i>Can you speak slowly, please?'</i> <i>'Sorry, I don't understand'</i>.• can talk about home and surroundings, e.g. <i>'I live in house'</i>, <i>'there is park near my house'</i>

- can talk about family and daily routine to a limited extent, e.g. *'I'm married, I have two children', 'she is 6 years old and she has black hair', 'I work cleaner', 'I get up 7 o'clock'*
- can talk about jobs and job-search to a limited extent, e.g. *'I was teacher in my country', 'I look for job in internet but too difficult'*
- **Grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation:** uses present tenses but high frequency of errors (see examples above); likely to make mistakes if tries to use the past tense (*went, saw, worked*, etc.); misses out little words like *'the' 'a' 'an' 'in' 'at'* etc.; may be hard to understand because of poor pronunciation, grammar mistakes and using the wrong words. May demonstrate great difficulty in understanding and/or making him/herself understood.

At Entry level 2

At this level, a learner is expected to understand fairly straightforward requests, instructions and information, and is expected to communicate information, feelings and opinions on familiar topics. For example, the learner

- can ask for time off to attend a hospital appointment, e.g. *'Can I leave early tomorrow? I have a hospital appointment 2 pm.'*
- can ask for clarification and confirm understanding, e.g. *'Sorry, could you repeat that please?'*
- can understand and respond to more detailed requests and information, e.g. *'The hours are long but there's no shift work'. 'I looked on-line and I applied for three jobs. I didn't hear yet.'* *'I want to get a job as engineer, like in my country. I had very good job, I worked for a big company'.*
- can create sentences of more than 5 words, e.g. *'I had a very successful business in my country' 'I lived in Italy for 5 years and then I got married and came to England.'* *'I really like going to the gym'*
- is able to hold a simple conversation on a familiar topic (e.g. family, home, work) and can speak more fluently than at Entry 1, e.g. When asked about favourite TV programmes: *'Hmm, I like soaps, Emmerdale, Coronation Street. My favourite is EastEnders'.*
- can talk about their daily routine, describe people, places and events more fluently than at Entry 1, e.g. *'I live in X, my house is small but I like it'.*
- **Grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation:** uses past as well as present tenses and can talk about the future, although may still make mistakes; uses link words, e.g. *and, but, so*; may use adverbs such as *actually, sometimes, usually*; has a larger vocabulary than at Entry 1; pronunciation difficulties can still make it hard to understand the person at times. May demonstrate some difficulty in understanding and/or making him/herself understood.

At Entry level 3

At this level, a learner is expected to understand straightforward requests, instructions, explanations and information. The learner is expected to communicate information, feelings and opinions on familiar topics, using appropriate formality, both face-to-face and on the phone. For example, the learner:

- can telephone to ask for an appointment with her child's teacher, e.g. *'I'd like to make an appointment to see*

Mrs. Smith, please.'

- can describe an accident at work, e.g. 'Yesterday, Anna was carrying a box across the room and she didn't see there was a chair, she fell and hurt her arm. It was bleeding. I called the manager.'
- can understand and respond well in most everyday situations, e.g. '*I'm sorry I didn't phone last night. I had to work late.*'
- is able to hold a basic general conversation, describe people, places and experiences, express opinions, make requests, give directions and instructions, e.g. '*First, you press this button, then wait. Second, when the red light goes out, you...*'
- is more fluent than at Entry 2, e.g. Well, I'd really like to get a job as a nurse, like in my country. I've got a lot of experience as I worked in hospital for 10 years and I don't mind working shifts.'
- can participate in a fairly simple discussion, e.g. 'That's OK. I don't mind working late, especially if I get paid more money'
- **Grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation:** can talk about past, present and future although still makes mistakes; has a larger vocabulary than at Entry 2 and uses a range of typical expressions; pronunciation might cause difficulties in some cases (depending on the person's first language). Demonstrates a good ability to understand and communicate at this level although will probably have difficulty with abstract or complex discussions.

At Level 1

At this level, a learner is expected to understand most media and communication. The learner is expected to clearly communicate information, ideas and opinions, adapting speech and content to take account of the listener(s) and medium. For example, the learner:

- is able to respond fluently and accurately to straightforward requests for information
- can talk at length about their previous work experiences, e.g. I used to work in a bank in India. I had a really good job and a lot of responsibility. It was quite hard work, though.
- can participate in discussions although more abstract or complex discussion will cause difficulties

At Level 2

At this level, a learner has native-like proficiency and is expected to understand all kinds of media and communication. The learner is expected to clearly communicate straightforward and detailed information, ideas and opinions, and to adapt speech and content to take account of the listener(s), medium, purpose and situation. For example, the learner:

- can talk fluently to an adviser about their experiences, interests and ambitions
- can produce long, complex sentences and is able to speculate on what s/he would do in a given situation, e.g. *I wouldn't have been late if the bus had been on time.*