

KAPLAN REVISED SPEAKING EXAMINATION DESCRIPTORS (September 2019)
(NB. Please select “THE BEST FIT” in each category; it is not necessary for all aspects to be present.)

GRADE	Task Achievement	Language Range	Language Accuracy	Fluency and Coherence	Pronunciation
KIC Band 90	- response constitutes a clear, consistent position, presented in a highly articulate, persuasive, and systematic fashion - interaction is completely natural & appropriate throughout	sustained use of a very broad range of complex structures & vocabulary comparable to that of an educated first-language speaker sophisticated use of idiomatic & technical vocabulary appropriate to an academic context - a very broad range of language to evaluate, hypothesise, convey finer shades of meaning precisely and use rhetoric to persuade the listener	- a very high degree of accuracy maintained throughout - precise use of idiomatic & technical language responses may appear error-free tone, genre and register fully appropriate to the task and context	- smooth, natural flow of speech comparable to that of a first-language speaker - communicates spontaneously and effortlessly throughout - speech is very well structured sophisticated use of a broad range of complex cohesive devices	- varies intonation and sentence stress in order to produce finer shades of meaning throughout - clarity maintained throughout
KIC Band 85	- response constitutes a clear, consistent position, systematically and persuasively presented - interaction is natural & appropriate throughout	- a very broad range of complex structures & vocabulary used sustained, appropriate use of less common, idiomatic or technical language - a broad range of language to present a very convincing argument & discuss diverse views - evaluates & hypothesises skilfully, employing a range of rhetorical devices	- a very high degree of accuracy maintained throughout precise use of idiomatic & technical language - errors rare and difficult to spot if not self-corrected - tone, register and genre appropriate for the task, with at most very minor, occasional inappropriacies	- speech is smooth, natural and spontaneous throughout - communicates almost effortlessly throughout - hesitations and/or repetitions rarely occur and are, at most, very minor - speech is very well structured - use of a range of complex cohesive devices	- varies intonation and sentence stress in order to produce finer shades of meaning through most of the exam - clarity maintained throughout
KIC Band 80	- response constitutes a clear, consistent position, systematically presented - interaction is appropriate and, for the most part, natural	- a broad range of complex structures & vocabulary used - use of less common vocabulary & collocations throughout - idiomatic and/or technical language used appropriately - a range of language to present a convincing argument & discuss diverse views - evaluates & hypothesises appropriately, employing some rhetorical devices	- a very high degree of accuracy - word choice precise even with some idiomatic or technical language errors are rare and only occur in more complex language - tone, register and genre are appropriate for the task, with at most very minor, occasional inappropriacies	- speech is smooth, natural and spontaneous throughout communicates almost effortlessly at times - hesitations and/or repetitions rarely occur and are, at most, minor - ideas connected logically and speech is well structured - more complex cohesive devices are often used	varies intonation and sentence stress in order to produce finer shades of meaning at times - clarity maintained throughout

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KIC Band 75	- many relevant points, developed fully and precisely - response incorporates discussion and evaluation of different viewpoints on the central topic - position is clear, consistent, and supported by complex lines of argument - interacts appropriately without support	- a good range of complex structures & vocabulary used - use of less common vocabulary & collocations throughout - idiomatic language used appropriately - a range of language to present a more purposeful argument & discuss different views evaluates & hypothesises appropriately	- a high degree of accuracy - word choice/order is usually correct - a few minor errors, only in more complex language, do not affect meaning and may be corrected - tone, register and genre are appropriate to the task, with at most minor, occasional inappropriacies	- a smooth, natural flow of speech is apparent throughout and communication is generally spontaneous - hesitations and/or repetitions rarely occur and are usually minor - ideas connected logically and speech is well structured - more complex cohesive devices are often used - strategies used to avoid misunderstanding	- clear, natural pronunciation throughout - uses a range of pronunciation features effectively throughout - a few very minor mispronunciations may occasionally reduce clarity
KIC Band 70	- many relevant points, developed fully some apparent familiarity with different viewpoints on the central topic - position is clear and incorporates some more complex lines of argument - interacts appropriately with minimal support	- a good range of complex structures & vocabulary used frequent use of less common vocabulary & collocations - idiomatic language often used appropriately - enough vocabulary to talk about the topic without signs of having to restrict what they want to say - enough language to present an argument & discuss different views often evaluates & hypothesises where appropriate	- simple structures consistently used correctly complex structures generally used correctly - word choice/order is usually correct - a few errors, usually in more complex language, do not affect meaning and may be corrected by the speaker - tone, register and genre are appropriate to the task, with at most minor, occasional inappropriacies	- a smooth flow of speech is apparent throughout and communication is generally spontaneous - hesitations and/or repetitions rarely occur - ideas connected logically and speech is well structured some more complex cohesive devices are used e.g. linguistic referencing and substitution, summarising, rephrasing and extending on the examiner’s points - strategies used to avoid misunderstanding	- clear, natural pronunciation throughout - uses a range of pronunciation features effectively - a few minor mispronunciations may reduce clarity at times
KIC Band 65	many relevant points, developed in some detail - talks about concrete and abstract topics some evidence of awareness of different viewpoints on the central topic - position is usually clear, with some attempt at more complex lines of argument - interacts without much support	- a range of simple and some complex structures - some less common vocabulary & collocations used - idiomatic language may be used occasionally - enough vocabulary to talk about the topic with some precision - enough language to present & explain views in detail some language to evaluate & hypothesise where appropriate	- uses most simple structures and some complex structures correctly - word choice/order are often correct even with more complex stretches of language some errors with simple and complex language, which the speaker may correct, do not affect meaning - tone, register and genre appropriate to task, with at most occasional inappropriacies	- a smooth flow of speech is generally apparent and communication is often spontaneous minor hesitations and/or repetitions sometimes occur but do not affect the main message ideas ordered logically so that the listener can easily follow the main message - uses a range of linking words & a few more complex cohesive devices e.g. linguistic referencing (e.g. <i>in such cases</i>) and/or substitution - strategies used to avoid misunderstanding	clear, natural pronunciation for the most part uses a range of pronunciation features e.g. sentence stress, rising/falling intonation - minor mispronunciations reduce clarity at times

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KIC Band 60	▪ responses are of appropriate length with minimal repetition ▪ a number of relevant points, developed in some detail ▪ talks about concrete and some abstract topics ▪ questions mostly understood, with some apparent familiarity with the central topic ▪ position is usually clear ▪ able to interact but may need occasional, minor support	▪ uses a range of simple and a few complex structures ▪ some less common vocabulary & collocations occasionally used ▪ enough vocabulary to describe aspects of the topic with some precision at times ▪ enough language to present & explain views, sometimes in some detail	▪ uses most simple structures correctly and may use some complex structures correctly ▪ word choice/order usually correct in simple stretches of language and sometimes with more complex language ▪ some basic mistakes, which the speaker may correct, but they do not affect meaning ▪ errors with more complex structures may affect meaning ▪ tone, register and genre mostly appropriate to task, some inappropriacies	▪ speech is delivered at a fairly even tempo, sometimes with a degree of spontaneity ▪ hesitations and/or repetitions sometimes occur but the main message is conveyed ▪ ideas expressed in a mostly logical sequence so that the listener can follow the main message ▪ words & phrases connected with a range of linking words and/or other cohesive devices, beyond the most basic forms ▪ strategies may be used to avoid misunderstanding e.g. repair, self-correction; reformulation	▪ pronunciation clearly intelligible throughout ▪ uses a limited range of pronunciation features e.g. sentence stress, rising/falling intonation ▪ minor mispronunciations reduce clarity at times
KIC Band 55	▪ some responses are brief or repetitive ▪ a number of relevant points, developed simply ▪ talks mostly about concrete topics ▪ questions mostly understood, with some evidence of awareness of the central topic ▪ expresses some attitudes and opinions clearly, but overall position may be unclear ▪ able to interact with occasional support	▪ uses a range of simple structures and attempts some complex structures ▪ enough vocabulary to talk about the topic using a range of lexis, but precision may be lacking ▪ enough language to describe the topic and express opinions and thoughts simply	▪ uses most simple structures correctly ▪ word choice/order usually correct in simple stretches of language ▪ basic mistakes may occasionally affect meaning ▪ errors with complex structures may often affect meaning ▪ tone, register and genre mostly appropriate to task, some inappropriacies	▪ speech is mainly delivered at a fairly even tempo ▪ hesitations & repetitions occur but the main message is usually conveyed ▪ ideas ordered as a sequence of points, which the listener can follow without much effort ▪ words & phrases connected with a range of linking words ▪ simple strategies may be used to avoid misunderstanding e.g. repetition & clarification of main message	▪ pronunciation intelligible throughout ▪ attempts to use some pronunciation features e.g. sentence stress, rising/falling intonation ▪ mispronunciations sometimes reduce clarity ▪ a noticeable accent may sometimes interfere with communication
KIC Band 50	▪ responses are often brief or repetitive ▪ a few relevant points, developed simply ▪ talks about concrete topics ▪ most questions at least partially understood ▪ attitude or opinions may not be clear ▪ able to interact but needs some support	▪ uses a range of simple structures and may attempt a few complex structures ▪ enough vocabulary to talk generally about the topic, but details may be lacking ▪ enough language to describe familiar aspects of the topic and express thoughts very simply	▪ uses most simple structures correctly ▪ word choice & word order usually correct in simple stretches of language ▪ basic mistakes may affect meaning in places ▪ generally uses appropriate tone, register and/or genre; some inappropriacies	▪ fluency maintained for the most part ▪ hesitations & repetitions occur but the main message is often conveyed ▪ ideas ordered to create the effect of a sequence of points, which the listener can follow with some effort ▪ words & phrases connected with a range of linking words ▪ student indicates they are following and attempts to avoid misunderstanding, e.g. by repetition of main message	▪ pronunciation mostly intelligible ▪ mispronunciations sometimes reduce clarity ▪ a noticeable accent may sometimes interfere with communication

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KIC Band 45	- responses are usually brief or repetitive - a few relevant points, developed minimally - talks about routine, concrete topics most questions at least partially understood - attitude or opinions are often unclear - attempts to interact but needs some support e.g. prompting, repetition, paraphrasing, etc.	- uses a range of basic grammatical structures - enough vocabulary to talk briefly about some aspects of the topic - enough language to describe familiar aspects of the topic	- uses some simple structures correctly - word choice & word order often correct but only in short stretches of simple language frequent basic mistakes sometimes affect meaning limited use of appropriate tone, register and/or genre; frequent inappropriacies	- fluency maintained at times - hesitations & repetitions occur and often impact the main message ideas ordered to create the effect of a sequence of points, which the listener can follow with considerable effort - words & phrases connected with a limited range of linking words - student may indicate they are following and/or attempt to clarify information using simple language	- pronunciation often intelligible, but longer stretches of speech cause minor strain - mispronunciations sometimes reduce clarity - a noticeable accent may interfere with communication
KIC Band 40	- responses are brief or repetitive - a few relevant points, not developed - talks about very routine, concrete topics some questions at least partially understood - attitude or opinions are unclear - attempts to interact but needs considerable support e.g. prompting, repetition, paraphrasing, etc.	- uses a limited range of basic grammatical structures - enough vocabulary to talk about familiar, concrete topics but using a limited range of lexis and with limited detail - enough language to convey key points limited to familiar, everyday topics	- uses some simple structures correctly word choice & word order sometimes correct but only in simple stretches of language - systematically makes basic mistakes e.g. tenses, word forms, sentence structure, etc. which often affect meaning very limited use of appropriate tone, register and/or genre; frequent inappropriacies	- fluency maintained at times but some long pauses evident - hesitations & repetitions occur and impact the main message - ideas not clearly ordered and the listener cannot always follow the main message - words & phrases connected with a range of basic linking words student may indicate they are following and/or attempt to clarify information using simple language	- pronunciation often intelligible, but causes minor strain throughout - mispronunciations often reduce clarity - a noticeable accent may interfere with communication
KIC Band 35	- responses are very brief no relevant points made - questions may not be understood - struggles to interact with the examiner	- uses a very limited or repetitive range of basic grammatical structures - some appropriate vocabulary to communicate on simple and familiar matters, e.g. to answer simple questions and give basic opinions but this is insufficient for the demands of the task	- uses a few simple structures correctly some control over word choice & word order, but only with familiar words/phrases - systematically makes basic mistakes e.g. tenses, word forms, sentence structure, etc. which usually affect meaning no apparent awareness of appropriate tone, register and/or genre; frequent inappropriacies	- fluency is mostly broken with many long pauses evident - hesitations & repetitions feature strongly and impact heavily on the message being conveyed - ideas not clearly ordered and the listener is often unable to follow the main message - words & phrases sometimes connected with basic linking words e.g. <i>and, but, or</i>, etc. - student cannot clarify information easily or indicate they are following	- pronunciation is intelligible at times, but causes some strain throughout - mispronunciations frequently affect the clarity of the message - a noticeable accent interferes with communication