

Before the Competition

- Please inform students and parents of the Terms & Conditions and deadlines of the Competition to ensure that each student enters the relevant category and is eligible to take part in the programme.
- The outline of the Competition's format and rules are explained in the Terms and Conditions and Judging Criteria – please refer to these if questions arise during the application process or please get in touch with the [Competition Team](#) who will answer all your queries, should anything arise.
- Please return the relevant Accompanying Teacher and Child Protection documentation to the Competition Team by the deadline specified to avoid disqualification from the Competition.

During the Competition**Individual Language Ability**

- In the individual language ability sections, the judges are looking for real communication and presentation, not a rehearsed performance. The winner of each category will be someone who has really got to grips with the Mandarin language appropriate to their level of learning.
- There are three main categories in the Individual Language Ability section – Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced. The two sub-categories are Beginners Plus and Intermediate Plus, for students with over two hours of regular Mandarin classroom hours per week.

Students in all categories will be assessed on presentation. In the intermediate category, there is a scenario task. In the advanced category there is an additional element which is the impromptu speech test.

Beginners, Beginner Plus

- Prepared speech
- Questions
- Translation sentences

Intermediate, Intermediate Plus

- Prepared speech
- Questions
- Scenario

Advanced

- Prepared speech
- Questions
- Translation sentences
- Impromptu speech

Presentation: each student will give a two-minute presentation in Mandarin on a prepared topic from the National Curriculum, e.g. family and friends, school, home and pets, leisure time, festivals etc. The choice of topic should be appropriate to the student's level of learning.

Each student will then be asked two questions in Mandarin relating to their presentation to ensure understanding and to verify the presentation has not been rehearsed. Students are allowed to have brief, bullet-pointed notes (up to a maximum of 25 words in English) but only at the appropriate level. No one is allowed to use notes during their performance at the final.

Students must prepare their presentation themselves; teachers are only allowed to guide and make corrections.

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Judges will assess communication, fluency, usage of vocabulary and pronunciation, therefore please make sure that your pupils focus on all of those elements in their preparation.

One of the Judges will ask each student questions in order to check that the student understands and can talk about what they have covered in their presentation and have not merely learnt it by heart.

Please note that if the Judges deem the student to have been placed in the incorrect category level and if their level of Mandarin is judged to be too advanced for their level, further investigation and questions may be asked to ascertain their background and how much additional tuition outside of normal class hours that they may have received. The Judges reserve the right to disqualify candidates who are incorrectly placed and their decision will be final.

Translation: each student will translate 3 sentences from English into Mandarin Chinese. Students receive points not only for correct translation of the whole sentence but can gain score for translating individual words correctly.

Scenario (for intermediate category students only): a scenario will appear on the screen in English which will require students to respond in Mandarin. They will have 45 seconds to prepare and one minute to speak.

Impromptu speech in Mandarin (for advanced category students only): students will be given a topic or phrase in Mandarin and will be asked to give a short impromptu speech. They will have one minute to prepare and one minute to give your presentation.

Group Performance

- In the group performance section judges are looking for a group drama performance which has all the participants joining in and using the language.
- The group performance can involve a short song in Chinese, a dance or martial arts display within the drama (and should relate to the context of what is happening in the story and should form a small part of the performance as a whole).
- The group performance should include “Cohesion” – which looks at the way in which the performance is structured and balanced and the way in which members of the group have contributed in equal proportions.
- Groups must give a drama performance in Mandarin Chinese.
- Groups can use one piece of recorded music to play during their performance and one PowerPoint slide to be shown behind them during their performance. The music should not contain lyrics which would make it difficult for judging panel to hear the song performed by competitors. It is also not permitted to have elements of sung or spoken English during the performance.
- Teachers cannot be involved in the on-stage performance.
- Students are allowed to have props written in English but only at the heats. No one is allowed to use notes during their performance at the final.

You should make it clear to students that marks will only be awarded for the students' performance, not for the PowerPoint, recorded music or costumes/props. The judges will assess student composition, communication, pronunciation, usage of the language, cultural content and cohesion during the performance. Teachers should ensure that students are aware and understand the importance of each and every one of these elements.

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On the day of the Competition

- Supervise your students at all times.
- Make sure you arrive on time for the registration to ensure that your pupils will have time to change/prepare to their performances.
- Please ensure that your students don't interrupt the performers during the day. Even whispering can be distracting for both individuals and groups performing on the stage, therefore you should remind your students to keep quiet at all times while the performances are taking place and also in-between performances in order for the judges to focus on assessing the competitors.

Further explanation of the Competition's rules can be found in the Terms & Conditions and Judging Criteria documents. Please read them carefully and contact MSCCompetition@britishcouncil.org if you have any queries.

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