

## Presentation: Final Considerations

These points are all based on a variety of issues that have emerged during previous presentations. The information is aimed at enabling you to give a polished presentation.

### Research

The audience will expect you to be knowledgeable about the subject you have chosen. In order to convey this impression, you will need to cite previous research, scholars and experts all of which will lend more credibility to what you are saying and demonstrate that you have prepared. If your talk is about an evolving situation, you will be expected to know the latest developments.

If your topic belongs to an enormous field, use the technique of concession. In other words, state explicitly that you are aware that the subject is huge but that you only intend to concentrate on a certain aspect. This makes you sound well-informed and gives a sense of focus. Put yourself in the audience's shoes and ask:

*Why are you telling me this?*

*Where's the evidence?*

*What can I gain from this talk?*

These questions might help you to focus on the key issues. Also, consider the kinds of questions the audience could ask you at the end.

### Practice

Ensure that you get plenty of practice at home. Ideally you should stand and pretend you have an audience in front of you while you go through your presentation ALOUD. It can be helpful to record your presentation and listen to it. Check the timing is accurate and listen carefully for any inaccuracies in pronunciation or intonation. Remember the importance of stressing key words and also pausing. If you are not happy with it, delete it and record yourself again. In the days prior to your exam, meet together with some classmates to practise your talks and rehearse some questions and answers.

### Delivery

Remember to smile at your audience and state your name and family name clearly. If you are presenting with other students, introduce them too. PAUSE after saying the title of your talk to give the audience time to see your first slide and understand the topic. Your time should be organised so that you do not spend too much on the introduction and focus on the details that should be in the main body. Remember to use signposting and do not forget the effect that pausing and, if necessary silence, has in conveying a strong message.

If you project a quotation, charts, tables etc. as supporting evidence, draw the audience's attention to the point that you are interested in (you can use the laser beam for this) and give them time to study it. To help the audience focus, consider whether you want information to appear simultaneously on a slide or to have one point appear at a time. Any tables, maps, charts, etc. should be in English unless another language is more appropriate on the basis of your topic.

You may use notes but reading the entire transcript of your talk is not acceptable. Do not be tempted to memorise your presentation either. This will affect your intonation and you will inevitably sound flat and bored. If your voice lacks interest and energy, the audience will immediately realise and will switch off. If you are able to sound relaxed and confident, the audience will remain focussed on what you want to say. Prepare prompt cards with key words to remind you of your points and, if necessary, consult a thumbnail of your slides to remind you what comes next. Ensure that you finish on a strong note without rushing your final remarks. Remember that you are expected to invite questions at the end.

## Pronunciation

Check the pronunciation of unfamiliar key words in your talk. Some online dictionaries such as [www.macmillandictionary.com](http://www.macmillandictionary.com) have a pronunciation link for most headwords and Wikipedia provides phonemic script for many of its entries. Practise saying difficult words until they sound natural and fluent. Also take care with numbers and dates and make an effort with words containing /θ/ and /ð/.

## Lexis

Ensure that you have the specific lexis for the topic you have chosen. Revise these expressions:

*discuss about* – this does not exist. It should be *discuss + noun*. Alternatives are: *develop, analyse, examine*.

*the major part of* – this does not exist. It should be *the majority*.

*talking about* – this is too informal. Use *as regards*.

*research / information / advice* – are all non-count and take 3<sup>rd</sup> pers singular verbs.

*argument* = false friend. Use *topic* or *subject*.

Remember the definite article is not used before a percentage.

14% = *fourteen percent* not *the fourteen percent*.

Abbreviations or acronyms should normally be in English. Decide whether they are common knowledge or whether your audience needs to know exactly what they stand for.

## Marking criteria

These are the areas that you will be marked on. Ensure that you have prepared well for all of them.

1. Initial stage: audience contact – clear opening slide and title – clear agenda
2. Signposting and organisation
3. Preparation: evidence of research – appropriate choice of subject/content
4. Audience: good eye contact and presence – facial expressions – gestures – energy
5. Grammar and vocabulary
6. Pronunciation: mispronunciations – intonation and word stress – linking
7. Delivery: fluency – clarity – pace and pausing – spontaneity – expression - volume
8. Use of visuals
9. Closing stages: sense of closure – confident conclusion
10. Question time: confident – satisfactory – in difficulty