



# COMMUNITY LANGUAGE ALLOWANCE SCHEME (CLAS) TEST

## WHAT DOES THE CLAS TEST ASSESS?

The CLAS Test assesses an ability to:

- convey information accurately and clarify routine points if needed.
- adhere to the procedural norms, including politeness and time-efficiency, that are expected in English language interactions.
- elicit information from customers.
- follow and understand LOTE native speaker speech
- seek clarification if such speech is not immediately understood.
- pronounce language accurately enough that speech is generally intelligible.
- produce language accurately enough that errors do not impede or impair communication.

You must possess a range of vocabulary that allows the explanation of government procedures and related matters with some precision and clarity.

## AIM OF THE CLAS TEST

The aim of the CLAS Test is to assess whether you are able to facilitate interactions with non-English speaking clients as an employee working in the NSW public service.

This test does not assess your ability to act as an interpreter. It assesses your ability to adequately assist a NSW government client who does not speak English or has a low proficiency in English with routine matters relating to government processes, programs and policies.

## SITTING THE CLAS TEST

Multicultural NSW has engaged the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) to administer the Multicultural NSW CLAS tests.

Once you have lodged your application for a CLAS Test with Multicultural NSW, this request will then be forwarded to NAATI. NAATI will contact you within three weeks to schedule a date and time to sit your test. All CLAS testing will be conducted at NAATI's NSW Office located at Suite 3, Level 5, 280-282 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

NAATI will confirm your test date and time with you via email. You need to arrive at the office ten minutes prior to your scheduled test and bring with you photo identification (e.g. driver's licence or passport).



## STRUCTURE OF THE CLAS TEST

The test will take about 15 to 20 minutes and is conducted live with a LOTE speaker. It consists of four sections:

### Part 1 (3 minutes)

This will be a 'warm up' section where the examiner will ask you a series of general questions to draw out basic information and allow you to ease into the testing environment.

Test section purpose: demonstrate an ability to talk about work, routines, and general information about the organisation.

### Part 2 (approximately 5 minutes)

This will be a role play where the examiner plays the role of a client with a routine request. You will need to draw out certain information and confirm this information with the client, explaining some basic points during the interaction.

Test section purpose: demonstrate an ability to ask questions, obtain information from customers and check that information is correct.

### Part 3 (approximately 6 minutes)

This will be a role play where the client (played by the examiner) will ask you to summarise a letter written in English. You will need to use plain language (in the LOTE) to clarify unclear points. This part of the test will allow you to demonstrate an ability to convey relevant information and ensure the client is aware of all salient points.

Test section purpose: demonstrate an ability to summarise a document and provide accurate information as well as respond to customers' questions.

### Part 4 (approximately 6 minutes)

This will be a role play where the examiner (playing a client) approaches you with a problem and asks for a suggested solution. You will have an opportunity to demonstrate your ability to listen, follow and understand a short narrative. You will also be able to show your ability to use tentative or suggestive language to provide help, advice and a possible solution to the problem.

Text section purpose: Demonstrate an ability understand a complex problem by asking questions and then negotiate a solution using provided information.

A guide to the CLAS test Practice Material and the MNSW CLAS Test Practice Material is attached.

## ASSESSMENT AND NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

Your examination will be (video) recorded and you will be assessed by a trained CLAS examiner based on a standard marking guide. Marking your test will take approximately one month.

NAATI will advise Multicultural NSW of your result and provide feedback about your performance.

## RESCHEDULING OR CANCELLATION OF A SCHEDULED TEST

NAATI may agree to reschedule a Multicultural NSW CLAS test. Requests to reschedule must be received by email at least one week prior to the scheduled test date. A reschedule will only be considered where an alternative test date is available. A rescheduling fee will also apply.

To cancel a test, NAATI must be notified in writing (eg. via email). A cancellation fee will apply.

## RESULTS REVIEW

If you are not satisfied with your test result, you may ask Multicultural NSW to review your result.





**National Accreditation Authority  
for Translators and Interpreters LTD**

# **A Guide to the CLAS Test Practice Material**



# A Guide to the CLAS Test Practice Material

This practice material reproduces the format and level of the test used for the MNSW CLAS Test, administered by NAATI.

## Overview of the CLAS test

The CLAS test is conducted live by NAATI role players. It is video-recorded, so assessors can mark the test once it is over. The CLAS test assesses a candidate's ability to speak a language other than English (LOTE) well enough to provide effective customer service in that LOTE in an Australian public service setting.

## Test structure

The test takes about 20 minutes and consists of four parts: a warm-up, which is not assessed, and three role plays, which are assessed. In the role plays, you, the test taker, will always play the role of a customer service officer in a public service setting, while the NAATI role player will always play the role of a LOTE-speaking customer who cannot speak English.

### Warm Up (maximum three minutes)

In the warm-up, the NAATI role player will ask you a series of general questions to elicit basic information about you, in order to ease you into the test environment. This part is not assessed.

### Role Play 1 (maximum five minutes)

In this role play, the NAATI role player is a customer with a routine request. You will play the role of a customer service officer, who needs to elicit particular information from the customer. In the course of the interaction, you are expected to confirm the information with the customer and explain some basic points.

### Role Play 2 (maximum six minutes)

In Role Play 2, the customer (the NAATI role player) will present you with a letter written in English. You, as the customer service officer, will need to explain the most important points of the letter to the customer in your LOTE, and to clarify, in the LOTE, anything that is unclear. You will need to demonstrate an ability to convey relevant information and ensure the customer is aware of all salient points.



### Role Play 3 (maximum six minutes)

In Role Play 3, the customer (the NAATI role player) approaches you, as the customer service officer, with a problem they want to resolve. In this role play, you will need to demonstrate an ability to follow and understand a short narrative, and use tentative or suggestive language to provide help, advice and a possible solution to the problem.

## Test materials

At the start of each role play, you, the test taker, will receive a test taker card from the NAATI role player. The card contains information about your role as a customer service officer, a list of tasks you are expected to complete during the role play, an instruction on how to start the role play, and the criteria used to rate your performance. There may be some other document you need to refer to as well, such as a letter or an internal policy document. These other documents will be given to you with the role play card.

## Role cards in English, but test conducted orally in the LOTE

The role plays are always set in an Australian public service context, and you as a test taker will always play the role of a customer service officer. For this reason, all test taker cards and supporting materials, such as the letter used in Role Play 2, are written in English. However, the spoken interaction will take place entirely in your LOTE, not in English. Remember, in the role plays, the customer (played by the NAATI role player), cannot speak English, which is why you, as a speaker of the LOTE, are helping them with their customer service enquiry.

## About the practice material

The practice material consists of:

- A brief outline of the parts of the test, with simple descriptions of the topics or situations for each part
- Test Taker cards for Role Plays 1 to 3
- NAATI role player cards for the Warm-up, and for Role Plays 1 to 3.

## How to get the most out of the practice material

1. Read over the role play cards to familiarise yourself with the structure, content and level of all the tasks.
2. Make sure you understand what the task is that you need to achieve.



3. Practise the tasks with someone who speaks your LOTE. Give them the cards for the NAATI role player and ask them to play the role of the customer. Practise with a number of different people, as each person playing the role of the customer will ask questions in a slightly different way.
4. Remember: The instructions the role player gives you, and all questions and interactions they have with you will be in the LOTE. As this practice material will be used by speakers of many languages, the customer role cards are in English – whoever is playing the role of the customer will need to orally reproduce them in the LOTE. They should also strictly adhere to the timing for each part of the practice test.
5. Ask the person playing the customer to provide you with feedback on how they, as a LOTE-speaking customer, felt about the interaction. Most importantly, did they feel you'd helped them achieve what they'd needed to achieve as a customer?

**Note:** The scenarios in the actual test will be similar to, but not the same as, the scenarios in this practice material. As each test has different role plays, each will have slightly different instructions. Listening is an important skill in customer service. In the actual test, please listen carefully to the instructions that are given to you.



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**National Accreditation Authority  
for Translators and Interpreters LTD**

**MNSW CLAS Test  
Practice Material**



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## Outline of test parts for this practice material

Parts of the test	Topic or situation
Warm Up – Talking about yourself	House or flat, travel, Internet use
Role Play 1 – Obtaining information	Council office – paying a fine
Role Play 2 – Summarising and providing information	Council office – letter about violation of hard rubbish and bin policy
Role Play 3 – Understanding and resolving a problem	Police Station – reporting a noise issue



# Warm Up

**Instructions to person playing the customer****Warm Up**

Greet the test taker, and provide the instructions below in the **Language other than English (LOTE)** – not in English.

*“In this first part, I’m going to ask you a few questions about yourself. This part will last for around three minutes, so don’t worry if I stop you after the time is up.”*

Start with the questions in the first bullet point. Try to keep this to one minute. Then choose one of the other question sets as appropriate to finish up at two to three minutes. Remember to ask questions in the LOTE, not English.

- Let’s talk about your house or flat.
  - How long have you lived in your current house or flat?
  - What do you like best about your current home?
  - What kinds of things would you change about your home if you could?
- Let’s talk now about travel.
  - What kind of places do you enjoy travelling to? Why?
  - Do you prefer domestic or international travel? Why / why not?
  - What was the last long trip you took? Tell me about it.
- Let’s talk about the internet
  - What do you use the internet for?
  - Which do you prefer using to access information, a computer or a smart phone?
  - Would you like to spend more or less time on the internet? Why?

Try to keep answers on point, and **do not create new questions** during the course of the conversation. You can ask follow up questions, e.g. why/why not?

Try to cover at least two topic areas, but be sure to stop when 3 minutes has elapsed.

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# Role Play 1



**TEST TAKER CARD:**

**Role Play 1**

**Role Play 1: Obtaining Information**

You work for the local council. Help the customer with their request. You will need to fill in the form below in order to respond to their request. The form simulates the computerised records used in the office.

**TASK:**

- \* Follow the steps in the form.
- \* Elicit required information.
- \* Ensure the information is correct.

**Please start the conversation as follows:**

**[In LOTE] "Hello. How can I help you?"**

- You are rated on:
- \* Politeness and Helpfulness
  - \* Efficiency and Relevance
  - \* Accuracy of Information Obtained
  - \* Accuracy of Language Use

**FIRST, OBTAIN CUSTOMER NAME**

Customer name: \_\_\_\_\_

(Entering this pulls up the test taker's name and other vital information)

**CONFIRM CUSTOMER INFORMATION AND UPDATE IT AS NECESSARY**

Address: 44 Girvan Grove, Bendigo, NSW 2100 \_\_\_\_\_

Fine: \$300, for LITTERING \_\_\_\_\_

**ASK AND ENTER PAYMENT METHOD**

Payment by:

- Cash
- Cheque
- Credit Card

Credit Card Number: _____ - _____ - _____ Expiration Date: _____ / _____
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**ASK AND ENTER RECEIPT OPTION**

Receipt for payment will be sent via post or email:

- By post to residential address (above)
- By email

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_@\_\_\_\_\_.\_\_\_\_\_

**CLOSE CONVERSATION**



**Instructions to person playing the customer****Role Play 1****Maximum 5 minutes (includes 30 seconds to read role card)**

In this role play the test taker needs to show they can elicit required information and ensure the information is accurate. Give the instructions below in the LOTE. Give the test taker the role card and allow up to 30 seconds for reading. The test taker should initiate the role play.

*“In the next part, we are going to do a role play. I will give you a role card and you have up to 30 seconds to read your role and look at the materials provided. Please ask me if you have any questions. Here is your role and a form that shows you what information to elicit.”*

**Customer Role Card for Role Play 1: Obtaining Information****Situation**

You are a LOTE-speaking customer who has come to your local council office to pay a fine you received for littering. You do not speak English.

**Required Details**

Customer Name: A generic name from the LOTE language background.  
Address: 44 Girvan Grove, Bendigo, NSW 2436  
Fine: \$300 for littering  
Payment method: Credit card  
Card number: 5266-1200-5858  
Card expiry date: January 2019  
Options for receipt: by email  
Email: Victoria78@youmail.com

**INTERACTION GOALS**

- \* Politeness and Helpfulness
- \* Efficiency and Relevance
- \* Accuracy of Information Obtained
- \* Accuracy of Language Use



# Role Play 2



**TEST TAKER CARD:**

**Role Play 2**

**Role Play 2: Summarizing and Providing Information**

*You are a staff member at the local council office. A customer comes into your office with a letter, written in English, sent from the council. He/she cannot understand it and needs your help.*

**TASK:**

- \* First, understand the basics of the letter.
- \* Then, give the customer the most important points of the letter.
- \* Finally, answer any further questions they have.

**Please start the interaction as follows:**

***[In LOTE] Hello, how can I help you today?***

You are rated on:

- \* Politeness and helpfulness
- \* Efficiency and Relevance
- \* Accuracy of Information
- \* Accuracy of Language Use

**Instructions to person playing the customer****Role Play 2****Maximum 6 minutes (includes 30 seconds to read the role card and 1 minute to read letter).**

In the course of this role play, the test taker is given a letter to read and is required to give the customer the most important points of the letter. To achieve the goal of this role play, the test taker will need to demonstrate an ability to convey relevant information and ensure the customer is aware of all salient points. Give the instructions below in the LOTE. Give the test taker the role card and letter and give him/her 1 minute 30 seconds to read the card and letter. The test taker should initiate the role play.

*“Now, we are going to do a different role play. You’ll again be given your role. First, you will be handed your role card and a letter and you have up to 1 minute 30 seconds to look at the role play card and letter before we begin.”*

**Customer Role Card for Role Play 2: Summarizing and Providing Information****Situation**

You are a LOTE-speaking customer who cannot speak English. You have received a letter from the council, which you cannot understand. You think this is something important, so you have come to your local council office to find out what the letter is about.

**Note:** You have not been aware of any changes to the policy on rubbish bins and hard rubbish.

**The Test Taker should start the conversation as follows:** *Hello, how can I help you today?*

**You (in LOTE):** *Hi. I received this letter from your office but I cannot understand what it is about. Can you help me?*

**Extra notes**

*Try to ask follow-up questions, getting the test taker to scan through the letter for information, and ensure that, as a customer, you have enough information to know what you should do next and by when.*

*E.g.*

*‘Am I being fined?’*

*‘When did this change take place?’*

*‘What exactly is hard rubbish?’*

**Notification: Hard Rubbish and Bins – First Notice****For resident at 14 Alfred Street Brown Hill NSW 2415**

Dear Resident

This letter follows on one sent two weeks ago regarding **changes to the policy on rubbish bins and hard rubbish collection**. We are writing to ensure you are aware of the changes and to warn you that further violations will result in a fine.

After numerous incidents in the local area in which bins have been stolen and vandalised, the council and local police have decided to revise local regulations in an attempt to prevent further loss of council property. Residents are now obliged to remove bins from the street or collection point **within twelve hours** after they have been emptied. Bins should be returned to your property and put in a secure place. It has come to our attention that **you have twice failed** to return your rubbish and recycling bins in the twelve-hour time period. Further violations of this policy will result in a **\$100** fine.

Additionally, there have been changes to the classification of hard rubbish. We have been notified that you have put out **inappropriate hard rubbish\*** with your bins, which can, and will in the future, carry an additional fine of **\$150**.

Please take note of the following policy changes and regulations for future waste disposal:

- **Empty bins** must be returned to your property no more than 12 hours after rubbish collection.
- **Hard rubbish\*** can only be put out for collection on designated days:
  - **By appointment:** You can schedule a hard rubbish collection online at [www.brownhillcouncil.gov.au](http://www.brownhillcouncil.gov.au), or by calling the council at 121 444.
  - **Biannual collection:** Hard rubbish collection takes place the first Tuesday of May and November each year. You do not need an appointment to put out hard rubbish on these days.

\*Hard rubbish **includes** items such as appliances, televisions, furniture, mattresses, paint tins. Hard rubbish does **NOT include:** recyclables, carpets, sinks, brick, stone, garden waste.

Thank you for your time and effort in keeping waste management running effectively in our community.

Sincerely,

Brown Hill Council



# Role Play 3

**TEST TAKER CARD:****Role Play 3****Role Play 3: Understanding a situation and working to resolve it**

You are a staff member at the local police station, working at the service counter where members of the community can come for police help. Your station has distributed the attached policy document (below) to all staff, to help them answer questions about reporting a noise violation.

A customer comes into the station with a problem.

**TASK:**

- \* First, ask questions to gain an understanding of the situation.
- \* Then, explain the different options that are available.
- \* Finally, agree to a next step.

Please start the interaction as follows:

*[IN LOTE] Hello, how can I help you?*

You are rated on:

- \* Politeness and Helpfulness
- \* Efficiency and Relevance
- \* Obtaining the full back-story
  - \* Presenting accurate information
- \* Accuracy of Language Use

**Policy Document: Reporting a Noise Violation**

**Community noise regulations:** No loud noises after 9 pm on weekdays and 10 pm on weekends. This can include loud parties, a barking dog, power tools, car alarms, etc.

**1. Isolated incidents:** If a neighbour is making a lot of noise after the times above, a member of the public can call the police at 131 444 to report the location; the police will come and investigate.

**2. Ongoing problem:** If a member of the public is concerned about an ongoing problem with noise, they can ask the local police to help them, through the following measures.

\* Mediation is a recommended first step. Police will help them discuss the problem with the other party and try to come to an agreement and understanding.

\* As a second step, a formal complaint can be made. Based on the formal complaint, the offending party will receive written notice about the offence and the legal requirement to abide by regulations.

**3. If the above measures have not resolved the issue, the complainant can:**

- a) take the case to the Community Justice Centre, who can help resolve the issue out of court free of charge, or
- b) seek a noise abatement order from the local court, at their own cost.



**Instructions to person playing the customer**

**Role Play 3**

**Maximum 6 minutes, (including 1 minute to read the role card).**

In this role play, the test taker should demonstrate polite understanding behaviour and attempt to understand a problem and offer advice. Successful task completion is agreement on the next step in resolving the issue. Give instructions below in the LOTE. Give the test taker the role card. The test taker has one minute to read this role card, as it is more involved and may take a bit longer to absorb. The test taker should initiate the role play.

*“In this final role play, you will listen to a customer explain a problem and then offer advice. You will first have to understand the problem and will then consult relevant documentation to offer advice. Here are the role card and policy document. You have one minute to read them over before we begin.”*

**Customer Role Card for Role Play 3: Understanding a situation and working to resolve it**

**Situation**

You are a local resident who is at the police station seeking police help, after having previously reported noisy neighbours to the police.

**Timeline**

Two weekends ago	New neighbours moved in next to you. They are young and, possibly, students. They had a big party on that Saturday night, involving some shouting and loud music, which lasted until 3 am.
Last weekend	It happened again, twice, Friday and Saturday.  On <b>Friday night</b> : you reported it to the police and you <i>think</i> they came around because the noise stopped about an hour later (1 am). On <b>Saturday night</b> : you were out late, so you are not exactly sure what happened that night. <b>However</b> , yesterday, you were speaking with another neighbour who heard another party at the same house on that Saturday night.

- You are afraid that this is going to be a recurring problem, and are looking for advice from the police.
- You are not willing to approach the problematic neighbours directly because of your low level of English.
- You do not want to make waves in your new neighbourhood.

**End the conversation when a next step has been agreed upon.**

**INTERACTION GOALS:**

- \* Politeness and Helpfulness
- \* Efficiency and Relevance
- \* Obtaining the full back-story
- \* Presenting accurate information
- \* Accuracy of Language Use