

3.6 KENYAN SIGN LANGUAGE

Kenyan Sign Language (504) is examined in the following three papers.

Paper 1 (504/1) KSL Receptive Signing Skills – This paper is video based. The paper tests the receptive signing skills of the candidates using a signed story, signed sentences and finger-spelt words and concepts.

Paper 2 (504/2) KSL Language Use -This paper tests KSL Grammar and the functional and creative language use of candidates in KSL. Candidates respond by writing in KSL sentence structures.

Paper 3 (504/3) Expressive Signing Skills - This paper tests the practical/expressive signing skills of the candidates in KSL. A team of three assessors rate each candidate using a Language Proficiency Interview (LPI).

3.6.1 Candidates' general performance

The table below shows the performance of candidates in KSL 2013 - 2022

Table 17: Candidates overall performance in KSL in 2013-2022

Year	Paper	Candidature	Maximum Score	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
2013	504/1	235	35	19.60	7.73
	504/2		25	12.08	4.54
	504/3		40	28.90	3.97
	Overall		100	60.58	13.26
2014	504/1	323	35	19.06	8.17
	504/2		25	9.23	5.41
	504/3		40	29.03	3.94
	Overall		100	57.26	15.26
2015	504/1	391	35	16.11	8.31
	504/2		25	7.65	4.4
	504/3		40	26.61	5.02
	Overall		100	50.37	15.38
2016	504/1	420	35	16.65	7.0
	504/2		25	10.1	4.13
	504/3		40	27.23	4.21
	Overall		100	53.98	12.78
2017	504/1	459	35	16.42	7.33
	504/2		25	11.22	4.55
	504/3		40	28.31	4.47
	Overall		100	55.94	14.25
2018	504/1	491	35	19.1	7.2
	504/2		25	9.6	4.95
	504/3		40	26.99	4.75
	Overall		100	55.69	14.75



Year	Paper	Candidature	Maximum Score	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
2019	504/1		35	13	6.6
	504/2		25	6	3.2
	504/3		40	27	4.8
	Overall	628	100	46	14.6
2020	504/1		35	16.7	7.79
	504/2		25	8.08	4.93
	504/3		40	28.15	4.88
	Overall	624	100	52.85	14.46
2021	504/1	704	35	19.38	7.59
	504/2	711	25	11.40	4.90
	504/3	710	40	28.79	4.66
	Overall		100	59.35	14.74
2022	504/1	805	35	20.77	8.16
	504/2	804	25	12.41	5.76
	504/3	804	40	30.3	4.39
	Overall		100	63.43	15.69

The following observations can be made from the table above:

- (i) The candidature for this paper slightly increased from 711 in 2021 to 805 in 2022.
- (ii) The overall Subject Mean slightly improved in 2022 with a good standard deviation of 15.69 and a mean of 63.43.

3.6.2 Paper 1 (504/1) Receptive Signing skills I

The 2022 paper assessed the candidate's ability to receive signed information and respond to the questions in writing. The signed story was based on the life in a village setting and the activities that happen in the village in comparison to life in the big towns and the lifestyle choices that have consequences. Candidates were expected to observe the signed story answer questions correctly to indicate comprehension of signed information. The signed sentences were drawing concepts from various thematic areas while the finger-spelt words had a wide range of vocabulary expected for the level. This paper is scored out of a maximum of **35 Marks**.

Weaknesses

Some of the candidates could not comprehend the action verbs as expressed in KSL; the use of the comparatives and superlatives in the signers facial expressions and non-manual markers.. In some instances, the candidates mixed up the answers to the questions asked. In the signed sentences section, most candidates did not follow the correct KSL word order when rewriting the signed sentences. Some candidates omitted key vocabulary and instead gave different words for signs used misrepresenting the signed information. Some candidates wrote incomplete sentences implying they have low vocabulary levels for comprehension and self-expression. The finger-spelling section was well done by most of the candidates. Some omitted or added extra letters to the spelling rendering the responses incorrect.

Advice to teachers

Sign language is a visual language and teachers are advised to ensure they develop the receptive skills of their students. The students can be guided to practice more on receiving signed information using a variety of visual resources with signed KSL information to enhance the acquisition of fluent receptive signing skills. Teachers should ensure that students are accorded more opportunities to build their KSL vocabulary for use in various contexts. Students could practice more with signed sentences in KSL sentence structures. Practice more of finger-spelt work to improve on the student's receptive signing skills. Avoid using glossed passages for such practice.

3.6.3 Paper 2 (504/2) KSL Grammar and Language Use

The paper had 2 sections:

Section A: The candidates were required to gloss a story on a sports day event in their school or, start a story with a given sentence on their first day in Nairobi. This section is scored out of a maximum of 10 marks.

Section B: The candidates understanding of KSL Grammar and language use for various purposes was tested (15 marks). This section is scored out of a maximum of **25 marks**. In 2022, this paper was poorly performed by the candidates.

Table 18 below summarise the weaknesses and pieces of advice to teachers

Section	Weakness	Advice to teachers
Composition writing on a Sports day event in their school Or, Starting a story with a given sentence	<p>The candidates who opted for this topic had challenges due to the limited vocabulary on sporting events. This was a factual writing, and most candidates did not get the correct tense and KSL sentence structures. Poor use of punctuation is still noted in most candidates work.</p> <p>Those who opted to write on their first day in Nairobi lacked creativity in their work</p>	<p>Teachers to teach the correct KSL sentence structures to use in a variety of contexts.</p> <p>More practice to be done on the use of punctuation of glossed work.</p> <p>More practice should be done on creative descriptive writing.</p>
KSL Grammar and Language Use	<p>The use of KSL glossed punctuation was poorly done. Most candidates could not punctuate the sentences given. Short pause (/) not well used.</p> <p>Use of language for leisure tested the candidates ability to apply knowledge on elements of a sign by describing the signs given correctly.</p> <p>Changing the tense in sentences into the future tense was poorly done.</p>	<p>Teachers should guide the learners on the use various punctuation marks as used in glossing KSL sentences.</p> <p>Emphasise on the importance of all elements of a sign for proper sign recognition.</p> <p>Practice with them how to identify different vocabulary and how to ensure the spelling is correct for use in crossword puzzles.</p> <p>Teach the correct tenses as used in KSL.</p>

Section	Weakness	Advice to teachers
Reading Glossed passages	Candidates gave incomplete sentences, some were lifting sentences from the passage given indicating poor comprehension.	More reading comprehension practice using well glossed passages should be given to the students. Use the strategies of enhancing reading comprehension to help candidates comprehend written information.

3.6.4 Paper 3 (504/3) Expressive signing skills

The paper consisted of a language proficiency interview given to candidates to sign about, a contemporary topic and a picture given for the candidate to choose **one** and sign about. This paper carries a maximum of **40 marks**.

Weaknesses

Some candidates had unclear sign production with frequent mix-ups in placement, indexing and finger-spelling. The vocabulary used was basic and sometimes used wrongly. The contexts given were not well understood by all candidates as some exhibited complete disconnect from the topic, some would often mimic the examiner with undesired head nods implying low comprehension of the topic under discussion.

Advice to teachers

Teachers are advised to use pertinent and contemporary issues in their society to practice the expressive signing skills of the students. Encourage the candidates to engage the assessors with questions that will show the development of their own creativity in expressive language skills.