

Qualifi Awarding Organisation and Global Cert Exam Board ESOL International Syllabus

Introduction

ESOL International Qualifications

ESOL International qualifications are designed for learners who are not native speakers of English and who wish to achieve a high quality, internationally recognised qualification in English from Beginner level (A1) through all levels up Proficient (C2). The qualifications are listed on the UK Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF). In addition to learning English to develop skills in support of travel, employment and enjoyment, the qualifications are suitable for learners who are preparing for entry to higher education in the UK or elsewhere.

ESOL International qualifications are designed to reference the descriptions of language proficiency in the Common European Framework Reference for Languages (CEFR). The levels in the CEFR have been mapped to the levels in the National Qualifications Framework for England, Wales and Northern Ireland (see Pathways to Proficiency: the alignment of language proficiency scales for assessing competence in English Language DFES/QCA, 2003).

This document details the Qualification Specification and offers the training provider guidance on assessment criteria and evidence requirements.

1. Qualifi Qualifications in ESOL International

The Qualifi Qualifications in ESOL International offer a comprehensive test of English skills in listening, reading, writing and speaking. The examinations are based on real life scenarios, designed to reflect the four CEFR domains (public, personal, educational and occupational) and the qualifications allow the learner to progress towards proficiency in the English language.

The qualifications are designed for:

- non- native speakers of English worldwide, including the UK
- people who need English for their everyday or working life
- learners requiring externally recognised certification of their level in English
- those attending English language courses over either a short period of time or a longer course leading to proficiency in English

There are no restrictions on candidate entry to these qualifications. However, it is recommended that candidates undertake a comprehensive initial diagnostic assessment to ensure that they are following a learning programme appropriate to their level of ability and skills. Please note, the content of the examination is designed to relate to the interests and needs of candidates aged 16 and over at all levels, but may be used with learners below the age of 16 if the centre deems this appropriate.

This Qualification Specification provides a comprehensive introduction to the Qualifi qualifications and Global Cert series of examinations in ESOL International.

The purpose of this specification is to provide information and advice for all existing and potential teachers and learners of the Qualifi qualifications and Global Cert ESOL International examinations.

There are separate examinations in Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking available through Qualifi at six levels:

- Beginner (equivalent to A1 on the Common European Framework and Entry Level 1 on the UK NQF)
- Improver (equivalent to A2 on the Common European Framework and Entry Level 2 on the UK NQF)
- Intermediate (equivalent to B1 on the Common European Framework and Entry Level 3 on the UK NQF)
- Independent User (equivalent to B2 on the Common European Framework and Level 1 on the UK NQF)
- Advanced (equivalent to C1 on the Common European Framework and Level 2 on the UK NQF)
- Proficient (equivalent to C2 on the Common European Framework and Level 3 on the UK NQF)

The qualification titles listed on the UK Regulated Qualification Framework are:

1. Entry Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International (Beginner A1), (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking).
2. Entry Level 2 Certificate in ESOL International (Improver A2), (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking).

3. Entry Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International (Intermediate B1) (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking).

4. Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International (Independent User B2), (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking).

5. Level 2 Certificate in ESOL International (Advanced C1), (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking).

6. Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International (Proficient C2), (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking).

1.1 Structure of the Qualifications

To achieve the qualifications, a learner must sit for the four mandatory units of Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking and achieve an average of 50% overall.

1.2 Guided Learning Hours

Learners generally take the following Total Qualification Time (TQT) indicated below to progress between levels. TQT means time in lessons as well as tasks you set them to do and attendance at exams. It takes longer to progress a level as learners move up the scale.

Entry 1 (A1) (Beginner) – TQT/Guided Learning Hours: 400/190

Entry 2 (A2) (Improver) – TQT/Guided Learning Hours: 400/190

Entry 3 (B1) (Intermediate) – TQT/Guided Learning Hours: 600/360

Level 1 (B2) (Independent User) – TQT/Guided Learning Hours: 600/360

Level 2 (C1) (Advanced) – TQT/Guided Learning Hours: 700/400

Level 3 (C2) (Proficient) – TQT/Guided Learning Hours: 700/500

The table suggests how many hours you might need to spend to reach each level of the CEFR, but remember these figures are intended as a guideline only. You may require more or less time and support depending on your own needs. There are a number of factors that may affect how long it might take you to achieve your desired level of English including: your language learning background, the intensity of your study, your age, and the amount of study/exposure outside the lesson times.

1.3 Entry Requirements

There are no entry requirements for learners undertaking the qualifications.

1.4 Progression Opportunities

Learners who obtain lower level qualifications may progress to higher levels of the qualification. Additionally, learners may progress onto academic or vocational learning in an English-speaking environment.

1.5 Features of the Qualifi Qualifications in ESOL International

Notice required for candidate registration is dictated by the centres outside the UK.

Certification Timescales

In relation to ESOL International qualifications, a qualification certificate of achievement will be issued to a learner or centre within the following timescales:

Certification

The results are issued approximately 20-40 working days (4-8 weeks) after the date of examination depending on the size of the cohort.

Certificates are issued within 30 working days (6 weeks) from issue of results.

Externally marked examinations

All examinations are externally set and marked by Global Cert and externally verified by Qualifi.

All speaking examinations are assessed within the centre, using an interlocutor appointed by Global Cert and accepted by Qualifi. The examination is conducted one to one. The interlocutor must be a suitably qualified and experienced English teacher.

Real World Situations

All examinations are task based and linked to everyday situations.

1.6 Duration of Examinations

Listening

Beginner	A1	30 minutes
Improver	A2	30 minutes
Intermediate	B1	35 minutes
Independent User	B2	35 minutes
Advanced	C1	40 minutes
Proficient	C2	40 minutes

Reading

Beginner	A1	60 minutes
Improver	A2	60 minutes
Intermediate	B1	60 minutes
Independent User	B2	75 minutes
Advanced	C1	75 minutes
Proficient	C2	75 minutes

Writing

Beginner	A1	60 minutes
Improver	A2	60 minutes
Intermediate	B1	60 minutes
Independent User	B2	75 minutes
Advanced	C1	75 minutes
Proficient	C2	75 minutes

Speaking

Beginner	A1	6 minutes
Improver	A2	7 minutes
Intermediate	B1	9 minutes
Independent User	B2	10 minutes
Advanced	C1	12 minutes
Proficient	C2	15 minutes

Descriptions of competence at each level (CEFR)

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise and paraphrase information from a variety of spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly to summarise or paraphrase content effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms, aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate needs.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can

	introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where s/he lives, people s/he knows and things s/he has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.
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2. Centre Information

2.1 Offering the qualifications

New Centres

Centres wishing to offer this qualification must be a Qualifi and Global Cert recognised centre. New centres can access details of the Centre Recognition Application process either by visiting <http://qualifi.net/centres/> or contacting Global Cert at www.globalcert-esol.gr

All procedures for the use of these qualifications, including approval, registration of candidates, verification and certification will be completed through Qualifi and Global Cert and all centres will have a designated Key Contact to support and enable communication and compliance.

Details of fees and charges are available from the Qualifi and Global Cert ESOL International representative local to you or through contacting Qualifi at <http://qualifi.net/contact/> or Global Cert at www.globalcert-esol.gr

Qualifi ESOL qualifications are 100% externally set and marked and therefore no moderation of the tests within the centre is required. Examiners and interlocutors will be routinely monitored to ensure consistency and will be trained by Qualifi/Global Cert prior to them marking tests or assessing competence.

2.2 Required Resources for Delivering the Qualifications

Staff undertaking roles as part of the delivery and examination of the qualifications should have a demonstrable level of expertise.

2.3 General Requirements of Exam Centres for the Speaking unit

All centres offering the Speaking unit of the Qualifi ESOL International Qualifications will have to meet the full requirements for the examination procedures as follows:

- Centres should have appropriately trained staff to invigilate the examination waiting rooms for Speaking examinations.
- Centres should have facilities for the examinations to take place at appropriate times under conditions required by Qualifi.
- There should be an examination room and a waiting area for test takers to wait in for the Speaking examination. It is important the rooms be close together in a quiet area and have two chairs, a table for the interlocutor's use and equipment to record the examinations, with sound, and a power point.
- The recording materials for the Speaking examinations must produce high quality recordings to ensure that the examinations may be clearly heard by the external examiners. The centres must make sure that the microphone is facing more towards the test taker than the interlocutor, whilst still ensuring that the interlocutor is being recorded.
- The centres must ensure that test takers who have taken the examination do not contact those still waiting to do so.
- The centres must ensure there is no information in the room that will help test takers in any way.

2.4 Speaking Examination

All Speaking Test Assessors must undergo training to ensure they understand how to carry out the role. Centres must supply a signed declaration confirming that this training has taken place and that there are no known conflicts of interest between the Speaking Test Assessor and any of the candidates before any speaking assessment take place. All personnel involved in either invigilation or marking/assessment must declare any potential conflicts of interest; please refer to the policy and associated documentation provided by Qualifi and Global Cert.

Examination papers (along with the Assessment Cover Sheet for Invigilators) will normally be received by centres no less than 1 working day and no more than 10 working days before the examination window.

A random sample of candidates taking the examination must be evidenced with an audio recording. Candidates will be examined by an Approved Speaking Test Assessor who marks their responses against the mark scheme on the assessment form. Candidates must complete assessments in English and the Assessor must record a provisional grade judgement on the assessment form.

The centre must return all completed mark schemes, records of provisional grade judgements, audio recordings and assessment forms immediately after the exam and under exceptional circumstances with approval, up to 5 working days to Global Cert by registered post, keeping tracking details.

Assessments completed by Speaking Test Assessors will be subject to a process of moderation by Global Cert to ensure consistency and appropriateness of assessment in line with Qualifi and Global Cert policy. If any issues are identified with a Speaking Test Assessor, Global Cert will require the member of personnel to undertake further training and ultimately, they may not be allowed to continue assessing on these qualifications.

2.5 Invigilation of Reading, Writing and Listening Examinations

Global Cert Exam Centres are responsible for appointing and training Invigilators according to the Exam Invigilator Person specification and associated training requirements. Centres must ensure that there are no conflicts of interest between the Invigilator and candidates by checking in advance of the examination (e.g. a relative of a candidate, a teacher who has prepared candidates for the examination being taken or there is a personal interest in the outcome of the assessment).

Invigilators must confirm and be satisfied with the identity of all candidates sitting the examination. By signing the Assessment Cover Sheet, the Invigilator/Head of Centre takes responsibility for confirmation of candidate attendance at the examination and that there are no conflicts of interest between themselves and candidates.

The overall conduct of the external assessments whilst in the exam room is the responsibility of the Invigilator.

The Invigilator must ensure that:

- Only other Invigilators must be in the exam room.
- Candidates are in the room and seated at least 10 minutes before the start time.
- No support is allowed for candidates unless under the rules of reasonable adjustments and special consideration and have prior permission.

- An Invigilator is present when extra support is provided – the extra support staff is not allowed to carry out invigilator duties.
- The minimum number of Invigilators in each exam room is:
 - 1 invigilator for 20 candidates or less
 - 2 Invigilators for 21 – 50 candidates
 - 3 Invigilators for 51 or more candidates
- Assistance can be summoned if there is only one Invigilator in the room.
- The number of Invigilators must never fall below the minimum specified with the regulations.
- Under no circumstances, the candidates must be left alone at any time.

The Invigilator is responsible for the overall supervision of the candidates during the external assessment process and the security of the assessment scripts at the end of the assessment session.

The Invigilator is required to:

- ensure the exam room is set up in advance of the start time of the external assessment in accordance with the regulations
- collect the external assessment materials, from the safe, locked storage facility, and these must remain unopened until in the exam room
- only open the external assessment materials once the exam room seating plan has been set up;
- notify Global Cert, immediately, if there has been any damage/interference with the external assessment package
- check the reference number on the question papers and answer books/scripts correspond for each candidate
- Ensure candidates are seated at least 10 minutes
- Record a seating plan that follows the order of the candidates' names as stated on the list of candidates, issued by Global Cert
- The details of the seating plan must be returned to Global Cert when submitting the external assessment scripts and unused assessment materials

2.6 Security of Examination Materials

All centres must provide secure and lockable storage for the following:

- examiner guidance for the Speaking examination
- recorded material for the Listening examination
- the examination papers
- all completed examination papers and recorded examinations

Centres must provide their own laptops, cassettes/CDs for Speaking and Listening examinations. For the recording of test takers, standard size cassettes, USB sticks or CDs and CD-RWs should be used.

2.7 Continuing Professional Development

Centres are expected to support and inform their staff on the best practice in delivery, assessment and verification, ensuring that their subject knowledge remains up to date.

2.8 Contact details

Additional information is available via the Qualifi website at www.qualifi.net and/or Global Cert www.globalcert-esol.gr

Further information relating to the ESOL International qualifications, including examinations, qualification specification, breadth and depth, grammar and vocabulary lists, policies and procedures etc are available within the Qualifi ESOL Manual, available via contacting Global Cert and/or Qualifi.

3. Qualification and Assessment Information

3.1 Listening

3.1.1 Format and features of ESOL International

Centres are provided with the recording material available as an mp3 file or on CD, which includes the whole of the assessment. The recording must be played in full and not be stopped at all during the examination.

All Levels

Part 1: Listen and respond

Candidates listen to 10 questions, statements or sentences twice and choose the correct response or ending to the sentence.

Part 2: Listen for detail

Candidates listen to two conversations twice and choose the correct answer to the questions.

Part 3: Extract key information

Candidates listen to two short broadcasts or passages, or at levels C1 and C2 a debate and a discussion, twice and extract key information from the broadcasts.

3.1.2 Assessment of ESOL International

The multiple-choice items in the Listening Part of the examination are 30. The marks awarded for the Listening Part are 25 and are distributed as follows:

- 5 marks for Part 1 (0.5 for each item)
- 10 marks for Part 2 (1 for each item)
- 10 marks for Part 3 (1 for each item)

It is advisable the candidates achieve a score of at least 12.5 marks in the Listening part although the passing mark for the examination is 50% overall.

3.2 Reading

3.2.1 Format and Features of ESOL International

All Levels

There are 30 multiple choice questions allocated in 4 texts.

20 questions assess:

- understanding the purpose of texts
- scanning for detail: specific information extraction
- summarising information
- sequencing information
- identifying facts or opinion

10 questions assess:

- vocabulary use

- identification of spelling errors
- grammar
- punctuation

At Advanced and Proficiency Levels C1 and C2

Skills also cover:

- understanding use of emotive language including metaphors, similes
- idiomatic language
- literary narrative or academic ideas
- arguments and opinions

3.2.2 Assessment of ESOL International

The multiple-choice items in the Reading part of the examination are 30. The marks awarded are 25 and are distributed as follows:

- 20 marks for the items referring to reading comprehension (20 items, 1 mark per item)
- 5 marks for the items referring to vocabulary, spelling errors, grammar and punctuation (10 items, 0.5 mark per item)

It is advisable the candidates achieve a score of at least 12.5 marks in the Reading part although the passing mark for the examination is 50% overall.

3.3 Writing

3.3.1 Format and Features of ESOL International Beginner (A1) and Improver (A2)

Candidates have to produce two pieces of writing. The first one can be either filling in a form or a description of a photo or a series of photos which make up a short story, using prompts given to help them. The second task is a piece of free writing, for example, a piece of writing about themselves.

Candidates must write:

- 2-5 sentences for Text 1
- 8-10 sentences for Text 2

Intermediate (B1) and Independent User (B2)

Candidates have to produce two pieces of writing. The first one is a formal or informal piece, for example a formal/informal letter, an email, an article, or argument. Candidates should include at least two specific content points.

The second piece of writing will be an informal one in which the candidate will have to write an informal letter to a friend or a blog entry expressing or evaluating ideas, emotions, preferences and justifying own opinion.

The points that should be covered in both writing pieces will be provided in the test booklet. However, candidates can produce their own ideas.

Candidates will be able to choose from two topics given for both writing tasks.

Word Limit:

Intermediate Level

- Text one: 100-120 words
- Text two: 80-100 words

Independent User

- Text one: 150-200 words
- Text two: 100-150 words

Advanced (C1) and Proficient (C2)

Candidates have to produce two pieces of writing. The first one will be a formal piece, for example an article or a discursive piece of writing based on the information in the fourth reading text found in the Reading part of the Examination, which will be highlighted in the text. Candidates should include at least two specific content points; one mentioned in the text, paraphrased, in order to demonstrate their ability to use a variety of lexical items and structures, and one of their own.

In the second piece of writing, candidates have to produce a piece of informal writing, inviting somebody to do something, expressing opinion or emotion, evaluating an idea or argument, justifying their own opinion, or giving advice to a friend. The points that should be covered in the second piece of writing will be provided in the text booklet. However, the test takers can produce their own ideas.

Candidates will be able to choose from two topics given for both writing tasks.

Word Limit:

Advanced Level

- Text One: 250-300 words
- Text Two: 150-200 words

Proficient Level

- Text One: 250-300 words
- Text Two: 200-250 words

3.3.2 Assessment of ESOL International

Beginner (A1) and Improver (A2)

In Levels, A1-A2 both tasks amount to a total of 25 marks. The 25 marks are allotted as follows:

- 5 marks for accuracy of response
- 5 marks for word order
- 5 marks for use of conjunctions, adjectives and vocabulary
- 5 marks for use of appropriate tenses
- 5 marks for development of ideas

Half marks can be awarded if deemed necessary.

It is advisable the candidates achieve a score of at least 12.5 marks in the Writing part although the passing mark for the examination is 50% overall.

Intermediate (B1) to Proficient (C2)

In Levels B1-C2 each task amounts to 25 marks. The 25 marks are allotted as follows:

- 5 marks for paragraphing and format
- 5 marks for content and development

- 5 marks for linguistic range (vocabulary, paraphrasing for Advanced and Proficient level, proper use of grammar)
- 5 marks for communicative effectiveness
- 5 marks for spelling and punctuation

Half marks can be awarded if deemed necessary. The total score achieved in both tasks is divided by two.

It is advisable the candidates achieve a score of at least 12.5 marks in the Writing part although the passing mark for the examination is 50% overall.

3.4 Speaking

3.4.1 Format and Features of ESOL International

Beginner (A1) to Intermediate (B1)

Warm-up

Candidates have to verify their personal information (name, age, occupation). They will also be asked to spell their full name.

Part 1: Effective Communication of Personal Information

Candidates should answer two questions about themselves, their studies/jobs, pastime activities, parents and siblings etc.

Part 2: Effective Communication in Social Interactions

Candidates are given two, out of a choice of four scenarios to elaborate on. Candidates will explore the scenarios giving examples of how they would react in those situations. The aim of this part is to test the candidate's use of functional language in a range of real life situations. The interlocutor and the candidate enact at the two situations. The interlocutor may need to pretend they are someone else (parent, teacher, stranger in the street, employer etc.) but the candidates will always be presenting the information as themselves. Dialogues should involve at least four exchanges (two short runs each). The interlocutor reads aloud the exact words given for the two situations which signal the start of the situation. The candidate will have the scenario on a prompt sheet to refer to if needed.

Part 3: Picture Description and Further Elaboration

The candidate is given one set of two pictures to describe and answer three questions based on the pictures (the set of pictures may vary).

Candidates should be able to describe the two pictures and answer the questions expressing their opinions and thoughts, engaging in discussion with the interlocutor.

NB. All four situations/scenarios for Speaking Part 2 will be given to the candidates one week prior to the exam. However, the two tasks will be randomly assigned to the candidates.

Independent User (B2) to Proficient (C2)

Warm-up

Candidates have to verify their personal information (name, age, occupation). They will also be asked to spell their full name.

Part 1: Effective Communication of Personal Information

Candidates should answer three questions about themselves, their studies/jobs, pastime activities, parents and siblings etc.

Part 2: Effective Communication in Social Interactions

The candidate is given two out of a choice of four scenarios to elaborate on. The interlocutor assumes the role of a teacher, a parent, an employer, a colleague, a friend etc., whom the candidate will try to convince, give advice to, express their thoughts, ideas and emotions to, or analyse briefly the advantages and disadvantages of a situation in order to help the Interlocutor reach a decision on a topic. The candidate will have the scenarios on a prompt sheet to refer to if needed.

Part 3: Picture Description and Further Elaboration

The candidate is given one set of two pictures to describe and answer three questions based on the pictures (the set of pictures may vary). Candidates should be able to describe, compare and contrast the two pictures and answer the questions pertaining to the topics the pictures describe, expressing their thoughts and opinions, engaging in conversation with the interlocutor.

NB. All four situations/scenarios for Speaking Part 2 will be given to the candidates one week prior to the exam. However, the two tasks will be randomly assigned to the candidates.

3.4.2 Assessment of ESOL International

All Levels

25 marks are awarded for the Speaking part.

Warm-up: 1 mark. Failure to spell one's name or verify personal information will cost the test taker 0.5 a mark.

The remaining 24 marks are distributed as follows:

- 3 marks for sustained monologue
- 3 marks for thematic development
- 3 marks for sociolinguistic appropriateness
- 3 marks for fluency
- 3 marks for interaction
- 3 marks for picture description
- 3 marks for accuracy
- 3 marks for phonological control

It is advisable the candidates achieve a score of at least 12.5 marks in the Speaking part although the passing mark for the examination is 50% overall.

Overall Assessment and Evidence

4.1. Qualification Grade

These four mandatory skills are given equal weighting of 25% which is applied to the overall grade awarded.

Overall achievement at each level is graded according to the weighting described above corresponding to the candidates' performance. Grade boundaries may be moved and adjusted according to how individual assessment papers perform to ensure consistency and comparability of standards. However, the grade boundaries would normally be as follows:

Qualifi ESOL	Fail	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Entry 1 (A1)	<50%	50-64%	65-79%	80%+
Entry 2 (A2)	<50%	50-64%	65-79%	80%+
Entry 3 (B1)	<50%	50-64%	65-79%	80%+
Level 1 (B2)	<50%	50-64%	65-79%	80%+
Level 2 (C1)	<50%	50-64%	65-79%	80%+
Level 3 (C2)	<50%	50-64%	65-79%	80%+

The qualification grade is overall. For candidates to pass the exam, they have to achieve a 50% overall mark. Failing to do so, candidates have to retake the whole exam.

Candidates who have scored 49% or less can re-sit the examination in any future examination series. There is no limit to the number of times that a learner may re-sit the examination.

All candidates are entitled to a free re-examination on the next available date in the case of not achieving a passing mark.

4.2. Curriculum Topics

The following is a suggested list of topics that could be covered in class:

- self and family
- home and local area
- education
- pastime activities
- travel
- entertainment
- personal relationships
- relationships in the workplace
- health
- going shopping
- food and drink
- weather
- public services
- environment
- history and culture
- technology
- science

At Advanced and Proficiency levels, additional topics could include:

- art
- local and national affairs
- commerce

Beginner A1

Listening

Candidates should be able to:

- follow speech which is carefully articulated and delivered at a slow speed where long pauses and repetition will allow the candidate to process the information
- follow short conversations in simple, everyday situations about self, family and immediate surroundings
- understand the nature of the relationships between the speakers
- follow short questions, simple directions and explanations
- extract key information from a conversation to enable them to complete a simple task
- understand simple questions, statements, single step instructions and short narratives where the speech is clearly and slowly spoken
- use stress and intonation to identify feelings and attitudes
- recognise simple vocabulary and very basic phrases concerning self, family and familiar surroundings
- extract key words, numbers and spellings from short statements, questions and explanations

Reading

Candidates should be able to:

- understand short simple narratives and descriptions, single step instructions, simple directions and explanations
- identify the purpose and audience of texts where this is clear
- find key information in simple short texts and understand the point of view where this is clear
- understand familiar names, words and phrases in simple texts related to everyday life, including social courtesies
- understand isolated words, simple phrases and straightforward sentence structures to link clauses and structure time
- understand the use of capital letters and full stops in very simple sentences
- use layout conventions, common signs and symbols to recognise the different purposes of text

Writing

Candidates should be able to:

- fill in simple forms with personal details and communicate simple information
- write short notes, cards and messages using very basic personal information such as where they live, what they like and what they do
- write simple descriptions, single step instructions and directions in familiar everyday contexts and express likes, preferences and dislikes on familiar topics
- use capital letters at the beginning of sentences, for proper nouns and for the personal pronoun 'I' and a full stop at the end of a sentence
- spell correctly personal key words and familiar words and check what is written for basic errors
- identify simple errors in the use of punctuation, grammar and spelling
- use simple grammar structures to write short sentences and use a basic range of vocabulary to deal with familiar topics
- write a short sequence of simple sentences to form a basic message

Speaking

Candidates should be able to:

- memorise a few simple phrases and sentence patterns to give straightforward information
- speak a few short sentences, using mainly memorised pre-packaged utterances with long pauses to allow searching for the correct expression, a less used word or to correct what has already been said
- ask and answer questions about personal details
- link groups of words using very basic linear connectors such as 'and' and 'then'; communication is based on repetition, rephrasing and correction

Grammar

Grammar skills must be demonstrated in both Speaking and Writing units.

All levels have been included from A1 to C2 so that the assessor can clearly gauge the level of attainment of the learner.

Learners may be exposed to the grammar required for the level above, but will not be tested on it. The standards for the level above are also included in bold text.

Simple sentences

- Word order in simple statements, instructions and questions
- There is/are + noun
- There was/were

Compound sentences

- Use of conjunctions and/but/or
- Word order

Complex sentences

- Clauses of time with when, before, after
- Reason because, result so
- Noun clause with that

Present reference

- Simple Present tense of be/have/do
- Simple Present and Present Continuous form of common regular verbs
- Simple present with no time focus
- Present continuous to express continuity
- Have got

Past reference

- Past tense of regular and common irregular verbs with time markers

Future reference

- NP + be going to, Present Continuous and time markers

Other

- Yes/no questions
- Question words who, why, what, where, when, how, which
- Auxiliary do for questions and negatives (positive questions only)
- Short answers such as yes he does, no I haven't
- Imperatives and negative imperatives
- Contracted forms appropriate to the level
- Let's + infinitive for suggestion
- Limited range of common verbs -ing form, such as like, go
- Verb + to + infinitive such as want, hope
- Very common phrasal verbs such as get up, switch on
- Questions such as what time, how often, how much, how many, how old
- Simple question tags using all the verb forms at this level
- Contracted forms appropriate to this level
- Zero and 1st conditional
- Range of verbs + -ing forms

Modals and forms with similar meaning

- Can, can't, would like
- Not negative questions
- Must (obligation)
- Mustn't (prohibition)
- Have to, had got to (need)
- Can, could (requests)
- Couldn't (impossibility)
- May (permission)
- Single modal adverbs: possibly, probably, perhaps

Nouns

- Regular and common irregular plural forms
- Very common uncountable nouns
- Cardinal numbers 1-31
- Countable and uncountable nouns
- Simple nouns phrases
- Cardinal numbers up to 100+ multiples of 100

Pronouns

- Personal - subject
- Object, reflexive

Possessives

- Possessive adjectives such as my, your, his, her, its, our, their
- Use of 's, s'
- Possessive pronouns such as mine, yours, whose

Prepositions and prepositional phrases

- Common prepositions such as at, in, on, under, next to, between, near, to, from
- Prepositional phrases of place, time and movement, such as at home, on the left, on Monday, at six o'clock

- Prepositions of place, time and movement, such as before, after, towards, up, down, along, across, in front of, behind, opposite
- Prepositional phrases of place and time, such as after dinner, before tea

Articles

- Definite, indefinite
- Zero article with uncountable nouns
- Definite article with superlatives

Determiners

- Any, some, a lot of
- All, none, not (any), enough, (a) few, (a) little, many, more, most, much, no

Adjectives

- Common adjectives in front of a noun
- Demonstrative adjectives this, that, these, those
- Ordinal numbers 1-31
- Comparative, superlative, regular and common irregular forms
- Use of than
- Ordinal numbers up to 100 + multiples of 100

Adverbs

- Simple adverbs of place, manner and time, such as here, slowly, now
- Simple adverbs and adverbial phrases sequencing, time and place, frequency, manner
- Position of adverbs and word order of adverbial phrases

Intensifiers

- Very, really, quite, so, a bit
- A range of intensifiers such as too, enough

Punctuation

- Use of capital letters and full stops
- Use of question marks, exclamation marks, use of comma in lists

Spelling

- The correct spelling of personal keywords and familiar words
- The correct spelling of most personal details and familiar common words

Discourse

- Sentence connectives: then, next
- Adverbs to indicate sequence (first, finally)
- Use of substitution (I think so, I hope so)
- Markers to structure spoken discourse (right, well, OK)

Functional Use of Language using Everyday Contexts

Conveying personal information in a social setting

Candidates should be able to:

- ask for and give basic personal information

- use a limited range of language, mainly memorised phrases, to convey information about people, places and things
- give short, simple descriptions of daily routines and give straightforward narratives to describe events that happen in the present tense

Expressing thoughts and feelings

Candidates should be able to:

- express likes and dislikes
- thank someone

Giving and receiving instructions/advice

Candidates should be able to:

- give and follow single step instructions
- ask people to do something

Social interaction

Candidates should be able to:

- introduce people including self and use basic greeting
- ask how people are and react to news
- ask someone to repeat something or show lack of understanding through the use of non-verbal cues

Improver A2

Listening

Candidates should be able to:

- understand spoken language which is clearly and slowly spoken, following short conversations in both formal and informal contexts related to education, work and social life
- understand simple questions, statements, instructions, directions and explanations
- identify mood, feelings and attitudes as well as opinions by recognising stress and intonation in the speaker's voice
- understand high frequency vocabulary and basic phrases relating to own life and experiences in straightforward, familiar formal and informal exchanges
- understand the main ideas in short simple messages, directions, instructions, explanations and short narratives
- extract key words, numbers and spellings from announcements and messages

Reading

Candidates should be able to:

- understand short simple narratives, descriptions, instructive texts and explanations on familiar subjects including those related to work and social life
- recognise the purpose of texts in both formal and informal contexts where the purpose and intended audience is clear
- identify key information from short texts on everyday topics and follow a line of clearly expressed argument
- follow the gist of simple informal letters, routine formal letters and short newspaper articles, using layout and signs and symbols to support
- understand common signs and notices found in public places
- recognise high frequency words and those with common spelling patterns in everyday texts and understand how punctuation and capitalisation is used in simple and compound sentences, recognising a narrow range of cohesive devices

Writing

Candidates should be able to:

- compose simple texts with the start of understanding of purpose and audience
- complete more complex forms which require choices to be made
- compose a short letter, descriptions, explanations, instructions and directions in both formal and informal contexts
- express their opinions clearly
- correct basic grammar, punctuation and spelling errors in written text
- spell correctly the majority of words used for personal detail and familiar common words
- use question marks, commas in lists and capital letters accurately
- construct simple and compound sentences with a reasonable degree of accuracy
- use a limited range of vocabulary to deal with simple and familiar contexts, using basic linking words to link a short sequence of sentences

Speaking

Candidates should be able to:

- speak with reasonable ease in structured situations and short conversations on familiar topics, although from time to time they will be asked to repeat or clarify what they have said
- communicate personal information about themselves and their family, including giving simple descriptions of their home or working life and the people that they are familiar with
- give and follow simple explanations, instructions and directions, asking and answering questions to clarify information
- give short descriptions and tell short stories expressing simple feelings and opinions using both simple and compound sentence structures

Grammar

Learners may be exposed to the grammar required for the level above, but will not be tested on it. The standards for the level above are also included in bold text.

Simple Sentences

- There was/were
- There has/have been
- There will be/there is going to be

Compound sentences

- Use of conjunctions and/but/or
- Word order

Complex sentences

- clauses of time with when, before, after
- reason because, result so
- noun clause with that
- word order in complex sentences
- complex sentences with one subordinate clause
- defining relative clauses with who, which, that
- clause as subject/object

Present reference

- Simple Present with no time focus
- Present Continuous to express the present and the future
- Present Perfect with since/for/ever/never, yet/already, just

Past reference

- Past tense of regular and common irregular verbs with time markers
- Used to/would for regular actions in the past
- Past Continuous

Future reference

- NP + be going to present continuous and time markers
- Future simple verb forms, NP + will

Other

- Limited range of common verbs -ing form, such as like, go
- Verb + to + infinitive such as want, hope
- Very common phrasal verbs such as get up, switch on

- Questions such as what time, how often, why, how, which
- Question tags using all the verb forms at this level
- Contracted forms appropriate to this level
- Zero and 1st conditional
- Range of verbs + -ing forms
- To + infinitive to express purpose
- Common phrasal verbs and position of object pronouns, such as I looked it up
- Simple reported/embedded statements and questions
- Appropriate at the level
- Contracted forms appropriate to this level

Modals and forms with similar meaning

- Must (obligation)
- Mustn't (prohibition)
- Have to, had got to (need)
- Can, could (requests)
- Couldn't (impossibility)
- May (permission)
- Single modal adverbs: possibly, probably, perhaps
- Should (advice)
- Might, may, will, probably (possibility and probability in the future)
- Would/should (advice)
- Need to (obligation)
- Needn't (lack of obligation)
- Will definitely (certainly in the future)
- May I (asking for permission)
- I'd rather (stating preference)

Nouns

- Countable and uncountable nouns
- Simple nouns phrases
- Cardinal numbers up to 100+ multiples of 100
- Noun phrases with pre- and post-modification such as fair-haired people with sensitive skin
- All cardinal numbers

Pronouns

- Object, reflexive

Possessives

- Possessive pronouns such as mine, yours, whose

Prepositions and prepositional phrases

- Prepositions of place, time and movement, such as before, after, towards, up, down, along across, in front of, behind, opposite
- Prepositional phrases of place and time, such as after dinner, before tea
- Wide range of prepositions, such as beyond, above, beneath, below
- Prepositional phrases such as in her twenties, of average height, in the top right-hand corner

Articles

- Definite article
- Zero article with uncountable nouns
- Definite article with superlatives
- Definite article with post-modification, such as the present you gave me
- Use of indefinite article in definitions, such as an architect is a person who designs buildings

Determiners

- All, none, not (any), enough, (a) few, (a) little, many, more, most, much, no
- A range of determiners, e.g. all the, most, both

Adjectives

- Order of adjectives
- Comparative, superlative, regular and common irregular forms
- Use of than
- Ordinal numbers up to 100 + multiples of 100
- Adjectives ending -ed+ -ing such as tired and tiring
- Comparative structures, such as as...as, is the same as, not so...as..., looks like/is like
- All ordinal numbers

Adverbs

- Simple adverbs and adverbial phrases sequencing, time and place, frequency, manner
- Position of adverbs and word order of adverbial phrases
- More complex adverbial phrases of time, place, frequency, manner, e.g. as soon as possible

Intensifiers

- A range of intensifiers such as too, enough

Punctuation

- Use of question marks, exclamation marks, use of comma in lists
- Use of punctuation in formal and informal texts, such as dashes, brackets, bullet points, speech marks

Spelling

- The correct spelling of most personal details and familiar common words
- The correct spelling of common words and key words relating to own work, leisure and study interests

Discourse

- Adverbs to indicate sequence (first, finally)
- Use of substitution (I think so, I hope so)
- Markers to structure spoken discourse (right, well, OK)
- Markers to indicate addition (also), sequence (in the first place), contrast (on the other hand)
- Markers to structure spoken discourse, (anyway, by the way)
- Use of ellipsis in informal situations (got to go)
- Use of vague language (I think, you know)

Functional Use of Language using Everyday Contexts

Conveying personal information in a social setting

Candidates should be able to:

- ask for and give personal information
- use descriptive language to convey information about people, places and things
- give simple descriptions of daily routines and provide straightforward narratives to describe past events

Expressing thoughts and feelings

Candidates should be able to:

- agree or disagree with other people's views
- convey their own feelings and opinions about familiar topics and provide justification for these
- express likes, dislikes and preferences
- ask for permission to do something and apologise for something they have done or said
- thank someone and express their wants or needs
- say whether they understand or not

Giving and receiving instructions/advice

Candidates should be able to:

- give and follow instructions and advice
- ask for and give help or for someone to do something
- give, accept or decline an invitation
- persuade someone to follow a particular course of action

Social interaction

Candidates should be able to:

- greet people and respond to greetings
- open and close a conversation, including giving introductions
- ask someone to clarify or repeat something
- ask for the spelling of a word or for help thinking of a word or the meaning of a word
- ask for and tell people the time of day, the date and the time

Intermediate B1

Listening

Candidates should be able to:

- understand spoken English which is relatively slowly delivered and clearly enunciated
- understand short narratives, conversations, instructions, directions and explanations where the contexts will be familiar and both formal and informal
- identify the function of the spoken information (see the functional use of language within the grammar section), the main points, purpose and speakers
- extract key information from media broadcasts on familiar topics
- recognise stress and intonation in order to follow discourse alongside feelings, emotions, attitudes and opinions
- understand high frequency vocabulary and expressions relating to familiar topics and should be starting to recognise these in less familiar situations

Reading

Candidates should be able to:

- extract details in narratives, instructions, descriptions and explanations; this will include biographies, articles or discursive texts on familiar topics and real-life situations both formal and informal in tone; texts must be more than one paragraph, some beginning to be longer and more complex in structure, but still straightforward in context
- understand the purpose of texts, even where the purpose is not explicit
- understand feelings and opinions in informal texts
- understand words related to personal interest, work, leisure and study
- use the layout and common signs and symbols to denote the purpose of texts; an understanding of the organisational features of text should be used to find key information
- use markers to indicate sequence, addition and contrast to build up meaning, including the use of paragraphing to structure a text

Writing

Candidates should be able to:

- write a straightforward text or informal letter on a range of familiar topics including an understanding of the features of informal and formal letters, narrative, descriptions, explanations, instructions, reports and articles
- express opinions simply with justification for them
- use punctuation accurately and spell the majority of common words and key words related to work, leisure and study
- proof read work and correct errors
- have an awareness of the reader and adapt their approach to meet their needs
- sequence information properly using grammatical structures to support this, including the use of conjunctions, connectives and discourse markers

Speaking

Candidates should be able to:

- interact competently if not always accurately in everyday familiar situations
- communicate personal information, opinions and ideas and respond to those of others in a variety of social situations
- exchange feelings and opinions and use extended speech to tell a story, describe or explain how to do something

- contribute relevant points to a simple discussion, using a good control of grammatical structures, with any errors not impeding understanding
- pronounce the sounds of English sufficiently well to be understood
- demonstrate a reasonable control of stress and intonation patterns
- use past tense accurately and a range of vocabulary and expression to deal with familiar situations and topics
- adopt some degree of formality and initiate and follow the norms of turn-taking
- speak without undue hesitation unless searching for information or vocabulary

Grammar

Learners may be exposed to the grammar required for the level above, but will not be tested on it. The standards for the level above are also included in bold text.

Simple sentences

As Improver (A2)

Simple, compound and complex sentences with subordinate clauses

- Word order in sentences with more than one subordinate clause there had been
- Use of common conjunctions expressing contrast, purpose, consequence, condition, concession
- Non-defining relative clauses
- Defining relative clauses with where, whose, when
- Defining relative clauses without relative pronouns
- Participial clauses describing action with -ing

Compound sentences

As Improver (A2)

Complex sentences

- Word order in complex sentences
- Complex sentences with one subordinate clause
- Defining relative clauses with who, which, that clause as subject/object

Present reference

- Present Perfect with since/for/ever/never, yet/already, just
- Present Perfect Continuous

Past reference

- Used to/would for regular actions in the past
- Past Continuous
- Past Perfect

Future reference

- Future Simple verb forms, NP + will

Other

- Zero and 1st conditional + 2nd conditional
- 3rd conditional



- Range of verbs + -ing forms
- To + infinitive to express purpose
- Common phrasal verbs and position of object pronouns, such as I looked it up
- Simple reported/embedded statements and questions
- Question tags using all verbs appropriate at the level
- Contracted forms appropriate to this level
- Simple passive
- Verbs (+ objects) - gerund or infinitive such as would like someone to do something + suggest doing something
- Causative use of have and get
- Reported speech with simple tenses
- Wider range of phrasal verbs such as give up, hold out
- Reported requests and instruction question tags using tenses appropriate to this level

Modals and forms with similar meaning

- Should (obligation, advice)
- Might, may, will, probably (possibility and probability in the future)
- Would/should (advice)
- Need to (obligation)
- Needn't (lack of obligation)
- Will definitely (certainly in the future)
- May I (asking for permission)
- I'd rather (stating preference)
- Ought to (obligation)
- Negative of need and have to express absence of obligation
- Must, can't (deduction)

Nouns

- Noun phrases with pre- and post-modification such as fair-haired people with sensitive skin
- All cardinal numbers
- Wider range of noun phrases with pre-and post-modification
- Word order of determiners, e.g. all my books

Pronouns

As Improver (A2)

Possessives

As Improver (A2)

Prepositions and prepositional phrases

- Wide range of prepositions, such as beyond, above, beneath, below
- Prepositional phrases such as in her twenties, of average height, in the top right-hand corner
- Wider range of prepositions, such as despite, in spite of
- Collocations of verbs/nouns + prepositions such as point at, have an interest in
- Preposition + -ing form such as after leaving

Articles

- Definite article with post-modification, such as the present you gave me



- Use of indefinite article in definitions, such as an architect is a person who designs buildings
- Definite, indefinite and zero article with both countable and non-countable nouns in a range of uses

Determiners

- A range of determiners, eg all the, most, both

Adjectives

- Adjectives ending -ed + -ing such as tired and tiring
- Comparative structures, such as as...as, is the same as, not so/as..., looks like/is like
- All ordinal numbers
- Comparisons with fewer/less
- Collocations of adjective + preposition such as responsible for
- Order of adjectives

Adverbs

- More complex adverbial phrases of time, place, frequency, manner, such as as soon as possible
- Adverbial phrases of degree, extent, probability
- Comparative and superlative of adverbs

Intensifiers

- A range of intensifiers such as too, enough
- Wide range such as extremely, much, too

Punctuation

- Use of punctuation in formal and informal texts, such as dashes, brackets, bullet points, speech marks
- Multiple uses of commas
- Use of apostrophes for omission and possession
- Use of other punctuation to enhance meaning

Spelling

- The correct spelling of common words and key words relating to own work, leisure and study interests
- The correct spelling of words used in work, studies and everyday lives

Discourse

- Markers to indicate addition (also), sequence (in the first place), contrast (on the other hand)
- Markers to structure spoken discourse, (anyway, by the way)
- Use of ellipsis in informal situations (got to go)
- Use of vague language (I think, you know)
- A range of discourse markers expressing addition, cause and effect, contrast (however), sequence and time (at a later date)

Functional Use of Language Using Everyday Contexts

Conveying personal information in a social setting

As Improver (A2) plus:

Candidates should be able to:

- speak about past and present actions
- compare information, things and people
- report facts and actions

Expressing thoughts, feelings and attitudes

As Improver (A2) plus:

Candidates should be able to:

- express surprise, fear or worry or lack of these feelings
- reassure and express regret
- express moral obligation

Giving and receiving instructions/advice

As Improver (A2) plus:

Candidates should be able to:

- ask for, respond to or reject suggestions with reasons
- make and agree on plans and arrangements making compromises and prohibiting someone from doing something
- make a complaint

Social interaction

As Improver (A2) plus:

Candidates should be able to:

- give an example to prove a point or emphasise a point
- encourage others to continue or indicate that they wish to speak, continue to speak or finish speaking
- sum up a discussion or conversation

Independent User B2

Listening

Candidates should be able to:

- understand spoken English delivered at normal speed
- follow and understand a range of types of spoken information including both formal and informal interactions in familiar contexts, such as conversations, narratives, explanations, descriptions and instructions; some of these interactions may include idiomatic expressions
- extract key information from media broadcasts, lectures and presentations using topics from everyday life, work or academic or vocational study
- identify the purpose, gist, detail and key ideas from a discussion, including an understanding of the feelings, moods and opinions of the speaker because of the stress and intonation used
- understand a wider range of vocabulary including less frequently used vocabulary and expressions and recognise the level of formality used by the speaker

Reading

Candidates should be able to:

- use a large degree of independence to read texts written in different styles and for different purposes. Topics used will vary between familiar and abstract topics and will be complex in nature
- identify the main ideas in texts and understand feelings, opinions and warnings in both formal and informal texts; some of the texts will be lengthy and will contain complex instructions or explanations
- understand articles and reports on current affairs which demonstrate the writer's point of view or opinions
- understand a broad range of vocabulary, but may still struggle with some less frequently used idiomatic expressions; texts may include images, graphical and tabular data to demonstrate the purpose
- understand the register of texts including those conveying emotion

Writing

Candidates should be able to:

- write coherently on a range of topics, linking key ideas effectively including descriptions, arguments, formal or informal letters, reports and narratives including both real and imaginary people and events
- use correct punctuation on formal and informal writing for effect and to enhance meaning
- spell a wide range of words from work, study and everyday life.
- use grammar correctly, although some errors may still occur where the learner is attempting to use complex structures
- understand the purpose of the writing and the readers who will use the information contained in the text
- use a suitable register for the topic and the reader and will use paragraphs appropriately to structure the information; the texts will follow conventional features of common text types and will use words and expressions relevant to the purpose and readership

Speaking

Candidates should be able to:

- speak with a degree of fluency and spontaneity making sustained interaction possible without undue strain
- take turns in a conversation, demonstrating the use of appropriate phrases to interrupt or deal with disruptions, adapting formality to the situation
- communicate personal information, opinions, feelings and ideas in a variety of social situations or on topics related to personal, academic or vocational life, including those which are more stressful to deal with such as complaints or disputes
- use extended speech to tell a story or describe, explain, give directions or express opinions
- pronounce clearly the sounds of English in connected speech with few noticeable long pauses, although there may be slight hesitation when thinking about which expression or pattern to use
- maintain a relatively high degree of accuracy without errors that impede meaning
- demonstrate a sufficient range of vocabulary to add detail to descriptions and to highlight emotions in arguments or when relating personal events
- produce some complex sentences although there may still be some searching for the right vocabulary or expression to use

Grammar

Learners may be exposed to the grammar required for the level above, but will not be tested on it. The standards for the level above are also included in bold text.

Simple, compound and complex sentences with subordinate clauses

- Word order in sentences with more than one subordinate clause
- There had been
- Use of common conjunctions expressing contrast, purpose, consequence, condition, concession
- Non-defining relative clauses
- Defining relative clauses with where, whose, when
- Defining relative clauses without relative pronouns
- Participial clauses describing action with -ing
- Word order in complex sentences, including order selected for emphasis
- There could be/would be/should be
- Could have/would have/should have
- Wider range of conjunctions including on condition that, provided that
- Comparative clauses
- More complex participial clauses describing action with -ed

Complex sentences

As Intermediate (B1)

Verb forms

Present reference

- Present Perfect Continuous
- All verb forms active and passive

Past reference

- Past Perfect
- Past Perfect Continuous



Other

- Simple passive
- Use of 2nd and 3rd conditional
- Verbs + (object) _ gerund or infinitive such as would like someone to do something, + suggestdoingsomething
- Causative use of have and get
- Reported speech with a range of tenses
- Wider range of phrasal verbs such as give up, hold out
- Reported requests and instructions
- Question tags using tenses appropriate to this level
- Used to/Would expressing habit in the past
- Mixed conditionals
- Reported speech with full range of tenses and introductory verbs
- Extended phrasal verbs such as get round to, carry on with
- Imperative + question tag
- Contracted forms appropriate to this level

Modals and forms with similar meaning:

- Ought to (obligation)
- Negative of need and have to express
- Absence of obligation
- Must/can't (deduction)
- Should have/might have/may have/could
- Have/must have and negative forms of these
- Can't have, needn't have

Nouns

- Wider range of noun phrases with pre- and post-modification
- Word order of determiners, eg all my books
- Extended range of complex noun phrases

Pronouns

As Intermediate (B1)

Possessives

As Intermediate (B1)

Prepositions and prepositional phrases

- Wider range of prepositions including despite, in spite of
- Collocations of verbs/nouns + prepositions such as point at, have an interest in
- Preposition + -ing form such as after leaving
- Preposition + having + past participle such as having eaten

Articles

As Intermediate (B1)

Determiners

As Intermediate (B1)

Adjectives

- Comparisons with fewer and less
- Collocation of adjective + preposition such as responsible for

Adverbs

As Intermediate (B1)

Intensifiers

- Wide range such as extremely, much too
- Collocation of intensifiers with absolute and relative adjectives such as absolutely gorgeous, very pretty

Punctuation

- Multiple uses of commas
- Use of apostrophes for possession and omission
- Use of other punctuation to enhance meaning

Spelling

- The correct spelling of words used in work, studies and daily life including familiar technical words

Discourse

- A range of discourse markers expressing addition, cause and effect, contrast (however), sequence and time (at a later date)
- Markers to structure spoken discourse (as I was saying)
- Use of ellipsis in informal speech and writing (sounds good)
- A range of logical markers (in this respect, accordingly)
- Sequence markers (subsequently)
- A wider range of discourse markers to structure formal and informal speech (can we now turn to)

Functional Use of Language Using Everyday Contexts

Conveying personal information in a social setting

As Intermediate (B1) plus:

Candidates should be able to:

- narrate and describe past, future and present events
- report facts and actions and give descriptions and specifications

Expressing thoughts, feelings and attitudes

As Intermediate (B1) plus:

Candidates should be able to:

- express agreement or disagreement with someone, either denying or agreeing but reluctantly
- concede a point or argument, expressing views and feelings with reasons to back them up
- refer to something, someone or an action which is remembered or forgotten
- comment on degrees of possibility, certainty or probability
- remind someone to do something
- express higher-level emotions and feelings such as doubt, incredulity and confusion



- comment on or question someone's ability, obligation or permissibility of doing something and to grant permission to do a task
- express own and ask about other's feelings including indifference, (dis)pleasure and (un)happiness, disappointment and gratitude
- express and ask about emotions such as fear, worry, anxiety and surprise including expressing empathy or sympathy for a situation or person
- express and ask about pain, anguish and suffering and express relief, fatigue, empathy and resignation

Giving and receiving information/advice

As Intermediate (B1) plus:

Candidates should be able to:

- agree to or reject suggestions with a reason/alternative, refusing to do something or expressing defiance
- provide solutions/alternatives to a problem/situation
- plead with someone to get something done

Social interaction

As Intermediate (B1) plus:

Candidates should be able to:

- give or ask for a definition of something, confirming own or other's understanding
- ask someone to repeat all or part of something
- understand paraphrased chunks of information, if not fully understood

Advanced C1

Listening

Candidates should be able to:

- follow extended speech which is delivered at normal speech where the speech may not be logically or clearly structured and the meaning may not always be explicit
- follow complex narratives, explanations, instructions and sequences and conversations in both formal and informal situations
- follow a discussion to obtain the gist, detail, purposes and key ideas and should be able to distinguish between fact and opinion
- follow a complex argument, using complex grammatical structures and conversations containing idiomatic and colloquial expressions

Reading

Candidates should be able to:

- understand long complex texts, clearly identifying the distinctions in style and purpose
- extract the main ideas of these complex texts and draw information from any part of a text or from a range of texts concerned with contemporary issues in which the writer does not always clearly make their viewpoint known; language used in the texts may be used to create different sophisticated effects and may be technical or specialist
- identify the nuances of attitude, even where opinions are implied rather than explicit
- understand the role of register even in emotive contexts
- recognise how textual features are used to achieve different purposes
- recognise and understand a range of logical and sequence markers and complex grammatical structures

Writing

Candidates should be able to:

- communicate ideas, impressions, feeling and opinion clearly
- write complex narratives and descriptions and formal letters, reports or articles to cover a range of functions, including those requiring tact and diplomacy
- present well-rounded arguments, emphasising and expanding on key points
- use punctuation marks correctly and effectively
- spell accurately words used in work, study and every day
- include some commonly used technical vocabulary chosen to meet the purpose of the text and the reader and idiomatic expressions will be used appropriately and naturally
- utilise a wide range of complex structures, including grammatical structures
- organise and link ideas using linking words and cohesive structures
- apply the correct register dependent on the context and audience

Speaking

Candidates should be able to:

- interact fluently and spontaneously on all subjects except the most abstract with some degree of searching for expressions or use of avoidance strategies
- communicate in all social situations including those requiring tact and diplomacy
- engage in discussion to express and elicit opinion, persuade someone to a point of view, try to reach agreement or perform a specific task
- speak on complex subjects integrating sub themes and developing key points to a suitable conclusion

- pronounce clearly the sounds of English in connected speech and use stress and intonation to convey finer shades of meaning precisely
- maintain a high degree of accuracy with few errors and evidence of self-correction
- confidently use complex sentences, idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms within a wide range of situations, including those which are sensitive or stressful
- maintain a high level of fluency will be maintained within discussions with clear demonstration of managing turn taking.

Grammar

Learners may be exposed to the grammar required for the level above, but will not be tested on it. The standards for the level above are also included in bold text.

Simple, compound and complex sentences with subordinate clauses

- Word order in complex sentences, including order selected for emphasis
- There could be/would be/should be
- Could have/would have/should have
- Wider range of conjunctions including on condition that, provided that
- Comparative clauses
- More complex participial clauses describing action with -ed
- Full range of conjunctions

Verb forms

- All verb forms active and passive

Other

- Used to/Would expressing habit in the past
- Mixed conditionals
- Reported speech with full range of tenses and introductory verbs
- Extended phrasal verbs such as get round to, carry on with
- Question tags using all tenses
- Imperative + question tag
- Contracted forms appropriate to this level

Modals

- Should have/might have/may have/could have/must have and negative forms of these
- Can't have, needn't have

Nouns

- Extended range of complex noun phrases

Prepositions and prepositional phrases

- Preposition + having + past participle such as having eaten

Articles

As Independent User (B2)

Adjectives

As Independent User (B2)

Adverbs

As Independent User (B2)

Intensifiers

As Independent User (B2)

Punctuation

As Independent User (B2)

Spelling

- The correct spelling of words used in work, studies and daily life including familiar technical words
- The correct spelling of words used in more specialized contexts (such as business, academic, international affairs)

Discourse

- Use of ellipsis in informal speech and writing (sounds good)
- A range of logical markers (in this respect, accordingly)
- Sequence markers (subsequently)
- A wider range of discourse markers to structure formal and informal speech (can we now turn to)
- A full range of discourse markers adapted to context and register

Functional Use of Language in Everyday Contexts

Conveying personal Information in a social setting

As Independent User (B2) but using more complex grammar and language.

Expressing thoughts, feelings and attitudes

As Independent User (B2) plus:

Candidates should be able to speculate or hypothesise about an idea or action.

Giving and receiving instructions/ advice

As Independent User (B2) but using more complex grammar and language.

Social interaction

As Independent User (B2) plus:

Candidates should be able to give and respond to constructive criticism.

Proficient C2

Listening

Candidates should be able to:

- understand virtually all spoken speech even when delivered at a fast speed
- understand complex conversations, narratives, sequences, descriptions, explanations and subtle arguments
- understand a professional discussion, including those from the world of academia
- extract and reproduce key information from a wide range of media on both abstract and concrete topics of general, academic or professional standard
- follow an argument, even when not structured clearly
- identify how subtle changes of intonation and stress can affect meaning and consistently understand the main ideas of complex, extended discourse, even if the topic is unfamiliar

Reading

Candidates should be able to:

- understand with ease virtually all types of texts including those with complex structures
- understand the main ideas of all forms of written language, including those which contain abstract ideas within linguistically complex texts full of highly idiomatic, literary or non-literary writing; topics will include professional, academic or social contexts
- summarise information from a range of texts or using a range of texts
- understand complex texts related to a wide range of contemporary issues, including those where the writer's viewpoint is not clear and be able to extract the finer points of attitude or implied opinion, following complex lines of reasoning
- recognise how textual features are used to achieve purpose
- understand how the full range of discourse markers can be adapted to the context and register

Writing

Candidates should be able to:

- produce well-structured texts on complex or abstract subjects that will be smoothly flowing and will demonstrate the use of cogent arguments
- compose formal letters, reports and articles on complex subjects and demonstrate a confident natural manner to produce a consistent style relevant to the purpose
- use punctuation accurately and effectively to enhance meaning
- spell words in more specialised contexts accurately
- maintain grammatical structures consistently
- use a wide range of vocabulary as well as idiomatic expressions
- use a wide range of linguistic devices to create coherent and cohesive writing
- use textual structures which include linguistic markers to enable the reader to understand significant points and opinions

Speaking

Candidates should be able to:

- display a comprehensive and reliable mastery of the language with no sign of having to restrict what is said
- deal with a very wide range of topics and situations including the discussion of contemporary issues

- defend and justify arguments and opinions, whilst using persuasive techniques confidently to persuade someone to a point of view or to reach an agreement
- use sophisticated explanations, descriptions and narratives on a complex subject, which convey subtleties of meaning and integrate sub-themes, to bring to an appropriate conclusion
- articulate pronunciation correctly, using stress and intonation patterns naturally to highlight, emphasise, and modify meaning with consistent grammatical control of complex language
- display a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms with awareness of connotative levels of meaning, conveying subtleties by using a wide range of modification devices
- maintain clear flowing and well-structured speech with a skillful interaction within turn taking

Grammar

Simple, compound and complex sentences with subordinate clauses

- Full range of conjunctions Verb forms
- All verb forms active and passive

Other

- Would expressing habit in the past
- Mixed conditionals
- Reported speech with full range of tenses and introductory verbs
- Extended phrasal verbs such as get round to, carry on with
- Question tags using all tenses
- Contracted forms appropriate to this level

Modals

- Should have/might have/may have/could have/must have and negative forms of these
- Can't have, needn't have

Nouns

- As Advanced (C1)

Prepositions and prepositional phrases

- Preposition + having + past participle such as having eaten

Articles

As Advanced (C1)

Adjectives

As Advanced (C1)

Adverbs

As Advanced (C1)

Intensifiers

- Collocation of intensifiers with absolute and relative adjectives such as absolutely gorgeous, very pretty

Punctuation

- accurate use of all punctuation

Spelling

- the correct spelling of words used in more specialised contexts (such as business, academia, international affairs)

Discourse

- a full range of discourse markers adapted to context and register

Functional Use of Language in Everyday Contexts**Conveying personal information in a social setting**

As Advanced (C1) but using more complex grammar and language.

Expressing thoughts, feelings and attitudes

As Advanced (C1) but using more complex grammar and language.

Giving and receiving instructions/advice

As Advanced (C1) but using more complex grammar and language.

Social interaction

As Advanced (C1) but using more complex grammar and language.