

Qualification and Assessment Specification

ESOL International

Levels:

Beginners (A1)

Qualification No: 601/2327/8

Improvers (A2)

Qualification No: 601/2328/X

Intermediate (B1)

Qualification No: 601/1930/5

Independent User (B2)

Qualification No: 601/1931/7

Advanced (C1)

Qualification No: 601/1932/9

Proficient (C2)

Qualification No: 601/1933/0

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Introduction

NOCN has been providing a qualification and accreditation service to providers across the UK for over 25 years and is justifiably proud of its reputation as, "...a provider of fully accessible, trusted and flexible qualification and accreditation services". It also operates in the international market.

Over the years, NOCN has worked effectively with our centres for the benefit of learners across the country; with a mutual interest in providing a continuously improving service. NOCN, whilst retaining all the advantage of being a national body, has always provided a personal, bespoke service to its customers and prides itself on its local presence and expertise within communities.

This qualification specification is a resource for NOCN centres who wish to offer the NOCN qualifications in ESOL International.

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 that is available and recognised world-wide and, at the highest level (NQF Level 3/CEF C2), are suitable for learners who are preparing for entry to higher education or professional employment 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 (CEF). The levels in the CEF 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 provides guidance to the training provider on assessment criteria and evidence requirements.

Contents

Introduction	2
1. NOCN Qualifications in ESOL International	4
1.1 Qualification Structure	5
1.2 Guided Learning Hours	5
1.3 Entry Requirements	5
1.4 Progression Opportunities	5
1.5 Features of the NOCN Qualifications in ESOL International	5
1.6 Duration of Examinations	6
1.7 Common European Framework of Reference for Languages	7
2. Centre Information	9
2.1 Offering the Qualifications	9
Recognised Centres, New Centres, International Centres and External Verification	9
2.2 Required Resources for Delivering the Qualifications	10
2.3 Security of Examination Materials	12
2.4 Tutors/Assessors	13
2.5 Continuous Professional Development (CPD)	13
3. Qualifications Information	14
3.1 Format and features of ESOL International (Listening)	14
3.2 Format and features of ESOL International (Reading)	14
3.3 Format and features of ESOL International (Writing)	15
3.4 Format and features of ESOL International (Speaking)	16
4. Assessment and Evidence	18
4.1 Fair and Equitable Assessment	18
4.2 Learners with Particular Requirements	18
4.3 Assessment	18
4.4 Curriculum Topics	20
5. Standard of Skills	21
5.1 Listening	21
5.2 Reading	23
5.3 Writing	25
5.4 Speaking	27
5.5 Grammar	29
Introductory Levels (A1 and A2)	29
Intermediate Level (B1)	38
Independent User Level (B2)	42
Advanced Level (C1)	46
Proficient User Level (C2)	48
6. Appendix 1 – Resource Suggestions	51

1. NOCN Qualifications in ESOL International

The NOCN qualifications in ESOL International offer a comprehensive test of English skills in speaking, reading, writing and listening. The examinations are based around real life scenarios which are designed to relate to the four CEF 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 in the UK
- People needing English for their everyday or working life
- Learners who require externally recognised certification of their level in English
- Those who are attending English language courses over either a short period of time or a longer course leading to proficiency in English.

The qualifications are primarily intended for learners **aged 16 years or over, but may be used with learners below the age of 16 if the centre deems this appropriate**. The content of the examinations is designed to reflect the interests and needs of adult learners at all levels.

This Qualification Specification provides a comprehensive introduction to the NOCN series of examinations in ESOL International.

The aim of this specification is to provide information and advice for all existing and potential teachers and learners of the NOCN ESOL International examinations.

In addition, NOCN has developed sample examination materials and mark schemes for each level of the qualification, which include the criteria for a pass at each level, and a guide for interlocutors to ensure that they fully understand the examination methods for spoken English and their part in ensuring that the examinations are administered correctly.

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

- Beginner (equivalent to A1 on the Common European Framework)
- Improver (equivalent to A2 on the Common European Framework)
- Intermediate (equivalent to B1 on the Common European Framework)
- Independent User (equivalent to B2 on the Common European Framework)
- Advanced (equivalent to C1 on the Common European Framework)
- Proficient (equivalent to C2 on the Common European Framework).

1.1. Structure of the Qualifications

To achieve the qualifications, a learner must take the four mandatory units of Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing. Learners may achieve unit certification for all units.

1.2. Guided Learning Hours

It is recommended that the qualifications should be delivered over approximately 300 guided learning hours.

This qualification specification covers all six levels.

1.3. Entry Requirements

There are no formal entry requirements for learners undertaking the qualifications.

1.4. Progression Opportunities

Learners who complete the lower levels of the qualifications may progress to higher levels of the qualification. In addition, learners may progress onto vocational or academic learning in an English-speaking environment or work in an English-speaking environment.

1.5. Features of the NOCN Qualifications in ESOL International

Examinations can be taken twice a year.

Four weeks' notice is required from centres outside the UK and 5 working days' notice required from centres within the UK.

Certification

Results and certificates are issued within eight weeks of the examination date.

Externally marked examinations

All examinations are externally set and marked.

All Speaking examinations are assessed within the centre, using an interlocutor appointed and trained by NOCN. 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	60 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	60 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

1.7. Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

ESOL International levels are linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, developed by the Council of Europe.

NOCN ESOL International Level	Common European Framework	Equivalent UK National Levels
Beginner	A1	Entry Level 1
Improver	A2	Entry Level 2
Intermediate	B1	Entry Level 3
Independent User	B2	Level 1
Advanced	C1	Level 2
Proficient	C2	Level 3

Descriptions of competence at each level

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different 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 and 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.

2. Centre Information

2.1 Offering the qualifications

Recognised Centres

If you are already recognised to offer NOCN qualifications and would like more information about offering the NOCN Qualifications in ESOL International, please contact: business-enquiries@nocn.org.uk.

If you are ready to add the qualifications to your curriculum offer, please log in to the NOCN website, under 'Centres/Processes and Documents', and complete the 'Additional Qualification Approval Request Form,' which can then be returned to business-enquiries@nocn.org.uk for the attention of your Account and Sector Manager.

New Centres

If you are interested in offering the NOCN ESOL International Qualifications but do not currently offer any other NOCN qualifications, you will need to be recognised as an NOCN approved centre. This process includes:

- Confirmation that the organisation has an adequate infrastructure in place to support the effective delivery of NOCN qualifications.
- An agreement signed by the principal authority in the organisation confirming adherence to the specified terms and conditions. This safeguards the quality assurance standards, in relation to the delivery and examination process.

International Centres

International centres who wish to offer the NOCN ESOL International Qualifications must complete the International Centre Recognition form.

If you would like more information about becoming an NOCN centre and offering these qualifications please see 'New centres' under the 'Centres' section on our website www.nocn.org.uk or contact compliance@nocn.org.uk.

External Verification

Once recognised as a centre, NOCN will allocate an External Verifier. The External Verifier will have on-going responsibility for monitoring the centre's compliance with the requirements of centre-recognised status.

External Verifiers will make regular visits to all centres. During these visits he/she will:

- Monitor the centre's compliance with the Centre Recognition Agreement by reviewing course documentation, meeting managers, tutors, invigilators, interlocutors, learners and administrative staff.
- These qualifications are 100% externally marked and, as such, require no moderation of the tests within the centre. Examiners and interlocutors will be routinely monitored to ensure consistency and will be trained by NOCN prior to them marking tests or assessing competence.

2.2 Required Resources for Delivering the Qualifications

As part of the requirement to deliver the qualifications there is an expectation that staff undertaking roles as part of the delivery and examination of the qualifications have a demonstrable level of expertise.

General Requirements of Centres for the Speaking unit

All centres offering the Speaking unit of the NOCN ESOL International Qualifications will have to meet the full requirements for the examination procedures as detailed in this qualification specification.

This includes:

- Having appropriately trained staff to invigilate the examination waiting rooms for Speaking examinations.
- Having facilities for examinations to be undertaken at appropriate times under conditions required by NOCN.

Centres must:

- Have an examination room and a room or waiting area for learners to wait in for the Speaking examinations. It is important the rooms are close together in a quiet area of the centre. The room for a Speaking examination must be set up for two people and have two chairs, a table for the interlocutor's use and equipment to record the examinations, with sound, and a power point.
- Ensure that the recording materials for Speaking examinations produce high quality recordings to ensure that the examinations may be clearly heard by the external examiners. The centre must make sure that the microphone is facing more towards the learner than the interlocutor, whilst still ensuring that the interlocutor is recorded.
- Ensure that learners who have taken the examination do not contact those still waiting to do so.
- Ensure that there is no information in the rooms that will advantage or help the learners.

Invigilation of Reading, Writing and Listening Examinations

Centres must:

- Ensure that all invigilators fully understand the requirements for conduct within examinations. The examination requirements may be downloaded from www.nocn.org.uk
- Ensure that the times allowed for the examinations are correctly adhered to.
- Ensure that all mobile phones are turned off and are not on the desks.
- Ensure that the rooms are prepared correctly prior to the examination as per NOCN's examination regulations. (See www.nocn.org.uk for more details).
- Have a suitable CD player available for the Listening examination. This must be tested before use.
- Ensure that all the examination papers and disks for the Listening examinations are collected in at the end of the examination time and stored securely until they are despatched to NOCN.
- Provide an invigilator who is not directly responsible for teaching the learners. If it is unavoidable, the teacher must not be the only invigilator in the examination room.
- Having appropriately trained invigilators for the Reading, Writing and Listening examinations.

Roles within the Speaking Examination

Examination waiting room supervisor (Speaking)

This person must supervise learners waiting for their examination. The learners must be in a separate room to the one used for examination. The supervisor will give each learner an Entry form which they will take into the examination room. Learners who have completed the examination must not come into contact with those who have not undertaken the examination.

The supervisor must check the learners' identity and confirm this on the Candidate Examination List and on the learner's Entry form.

Learners may only enter the examination room when the interlocutor requests this.

Interlocutor (Speaking)

The interlocutor must be a suitably qualified and experienced teacher of English and be familiar with the **NOCN Guide for Interlocutors**. The interlocutors are appointed and trained by NOCN. The examination cannot be administered without preparation and the interlocutor must be familiar with the content and format of the examination before the actual examination session.

The interlocutor must follow the format and script of the examination as closely as possible. Guidance can be found in the NOCN Guide for Interlocutors.

The examination coordinator will give the examination material to the interlocutor one hour before the scheduled time for the examination.

The interlocutor must:

- Ensure that they understand the format and script for the examination.
- Read and thoroughly familiarise themselves with the specific content of all parts of the examination.
- Make sure that the recording equipment is working properly.
- Check that there is sufficient supply of recording materials available with a backup recorder in case of breakdown.
- Ensure that there is sufficient supply of paper and pencils for the learners to use during the examination to be used if required for preparation for the tasks.

The interlocutor and the examination waiting room supervisor will have an attendance register, the Candidate Examination List, recording the names of the learners to be tested in alphabetical order. Learners must be tested in this order.

When the learner enters the examination room, the interlocutor must tick the learner's name on the Candidate Examination List. The learner will bring in an Entry form which the examination waiting room supervisor will have signed to say that they have checked the learner's identity.

Details of the format and script for the examination are found in the examination pack and the NOCN Guide for Interlocutors.

2.3 Security of Examination Materials

Centres must provide secure and lockable storage for:

- Examiner guidance for the Speaking examination.
- Recorded material for the Listening examination.
- The examination papers.
- All completed examination papers and recorded examinations (required on an interim basis).

Please note: centres must provide their own laptops, cassettes/CDs for Speaking and Listening examinations. For recordings of learners, standard size cassettes, USB sticks or CDs and CD-RWs only should be used.

2.4 Tutor/Assessor Requirements

NOCN expects that Tutors/Assessors are able to demonstrate the following competencies:

- Be technically competent in English language and have experience of delivering training within the area. The minimum expectation is that the level of experience should be at the same level as the training that is to be delivered.
- A specialist knowledge of ESOL learning. The minimum expectation is that the level of knowledge should be at the same level as the training that is to be delivered.
- Hold a recognised teaching qualification or, for new tutors, undertake and complete initial teacher training to a minimum Level 3 standard within 12 months of taking up the tutor role.

2.5 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Centres are expected to support their staff, ensuring that their subject knowledge remains current and that their members of staff are up to date with regards to best practice in delivery, assessment and verification.

3. Qualification Information

3.1 Format and features of ESOL International (Listening)

Centres are provided with a recording, which can be available as an MP3 file or on CD, for the examination which includes the whole of the assessment. The recording must be played in full and must not be stopped at all during the examination.

All Levels

Part 1: listen and respond (10 marks)

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

Part 2: listen for detail (10 marks)

10 multiple choice questions. Learners listen to two conversations twice and choose the correct answer to the questions.

Part 3: extract key information (11 marks)

11 multiple choice questions. Learners listen to two short broadcasts, or at C1 and C2, a debate and a discussion, twice and extract key information from the broadcasts.

3.2 Format and features of ESOL International (Reading)

All Levels

There are 31 multiple choice questions allocated between 4 texts.

Skills covered are:

- understanding the purpose of texts
- extracting key information by detailed reading
- locating specific information
- summarising information
- sequencing information
- identifying facts or opinion
- vocabulary use, spelling, punctuation and grammar errors.

At Advanced and Proficient 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.

3.3 Format and features of ESOL International (Writing)

Levels Beginner and Improver

Learners have to produce three pieces of writing to include filling in a form, a description of a photo and a piece of free writing, for example, a piece of writing about themselves. The fourth task is to complete the gaps in sentences, to check knowledge of grammar.

Levels Intermediate to Proficient

Learners have to produce two pieces of writing.

One is a formal piece, for example, a letter, leaflet, article, report or argument for a specific audience. The learner is expected to include at least two specific content points. The other is an informal letter, narrative or descriptive text for a specific audience.

In the second text, learners are directed to specific functions such as inviting someone to do something, describing what you will do and at higher levels, persuasion, argument, hypothesis, expressing opinion and emotion, evaluating an idea or argument and justifying own opinion.

Beginner Level

- Text 1 - learners must write two sentences.
- Text 2 - learners must write five sentences
- Text 3 - learners must write ten sentences

Improver Level

- Text 1 - learners must write two sentences.
- Text 2 - learners must write five sentences
- Text 3 - learners must write ten sentences

Intermediate Level

- Text 1 should be 75-100 words
- Text 2 should be 100-125 words

Independent User Level

- Text 1 should be 100-150 words
- Text 2 should be 150-200 words

Advanced Level

- Text 1 should be 150-200 words
- Text 2 should be 250-300 words

Proficient Level

- Text 1 should be 200-250 words
- Text 2 should be 250-300 words

3.4 Format and features of ESOL International (Speaking)

Speaking Part 1: To communicate personal information

Beginner and Improver: to give straightforward information about self

Intermediate and Independent User: to express opinions and ideas

Advanced: to communicate opinions and ideas on a variety of topics and

Proficient: to give personal opinions on contemporary topics and issues

Learners will:

- Give name
- Answer four questions

The aim of this part is to settle the learner and to elicit personal and everyday information. Questions range from very simple, e.g. *Tell me your name?* (**Beginner**) to complex, e.g. *How will learning English be beneficial for you?* (**Proficient**). The interlocutor may expand the questioning, particularly at the higher levels, to help the learner produce sufficient language. Guidance about the prompts that can be used is within the Interlocutor Scripts.

Speaking Part 2: To communicate appropriately in social situations

All Levels: to communicate in real-life situations using a range of functional language to elicit or respond as appropriate

Advanced and Proficient: to also show the ability to use a wide range of language functions

Two or three situations will be presented by the interlocutor and the learner will explore the situation giving examples of how they would react in those situations.

The aim of this part is to test the learner's use of functional language in a range of real-life situations. The interlocutor and learner enact at least two situations. The interlocutor may need to pretend to be someone else, but the learner will always be presenting the information as themselves.

At the lower levels the dialogue will usually involve four exchanges (up to two short turns each). At the higher levels the given situations will require the learner to enter into exchanges of greater length and complexity. The interlocutor reads aloud the exact

words given for the two situations which signal the start of the dialogue. The learner will have the scenario on a prompt sheet to refer to if needed.

The interlocutor allows the learner to guide and maintain the interaction, particularly at higher levels. At the higher levels the learner's contribution must demonstrate an awareness of the tone and register appropriate to the situations. For example, when making a complaint it is necessary to consider the tone of voice that should be used. Further guidance for interlocutors can be found in the NOCN Guide for Interlocutors.

Speaking Part 3: To exchange information and opinions

Beginner and Improver: to use simple sentences and phrases to communicate in simple everyday situations

Intermediate and Independent User: to co-operate to reach agreement/decision

Advanced and Proficient: to engage in discussion and to justify, challenge and persuade when expressing and eliciting opinion

Learners will be given a scenario and allowed two minutes to prepare for the discussion/conversation. They will then hold a discussion/conversation with the interlocutor. The learner will be given the scenario on a prompt sheet to refer to if required.

The aim of this part is to test the learner's ability to use English to give and receive information in order to perform a communicative task. The task topics do not require the learner to have specialist knowledge but at **Advanced** and **Proficient** levels learners are expected to be able to give information and opinions about social and contemporary issues.

The interlocutor and learner exchange information to perform a task.

NB. It is the language used in the interaction that is most important, not the ability to complete the task in the given time. However, the interaction should move towards achievement of the task set. It does not matter if the task lasts a little longer than the time set, although the overall time for the whole Speaking examination must be no more than one minute over or below the specified time.

4. Assessment and Evidence

4.1. Fair and Equitable Assessment

Assessment within the NOCN ESOL International Qualifications is designed to be accessible and inclusive.

The assessment methodology is appropriate for individual examination or for groups of learners.

4.2 Learners with Particular Requirements

If you are an NOCN Recognised Centre and have learners with particular requirements, please see the 'NOCN Access to Fair Assessment Policy and Procedure' in the NOCN Centre Handbook by logging on to www.nocn.org.uk and access 'Centres/Processes and Documents'.

This policy gives clear guidance on the reasonable adjustments and arrangements that can be made to take account of disability or learning difficulty without compromising the assessment criteria.

The NOCN Centre Recognition process requires policy statements on Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Disability Discrimination. These policy statements are then checked and confirmed through the Quality Review and Risk Assessment process. Please contact compliance@nocn.org.uk for further details.

4.3 Assessment

Each unit of the qualification is assessed separately and a grade given for each unit. The grades boundaries may differ slightly dependent on the examination performance, but the expected boundaries are identified here:

Reading and Listening

Reading and listening examinations are multiple choice questions and the questions are marked on a one mark per correct answer basis.

Grades awarded are counted as part of the overall qualification grade.

Writing

In Levels A1 and A2 all of the tasks amount to a total of 24 marks across the paper. In Levels B1, B2, C1 and C2 there are two tasks, both worth 12 marks each, giving a total of 24 marks across the paper. Learners must score marks on both tasks to pass the paper.

Grades awarded are counted as part of the overall qualification grade.

Speaking

Spoken ESOL examinations are assessed against the criteria as detailed in the syllabus.

Part 1 assesses:

- accuracy of response.

Part 2 assesses:

- register
- accuracy
- pronunciation
- effective communication.

Part 3 assesses:

- use of vocabulary
- accuracy and grammar
- pronunciation
- listening and responding.

Grades awarded are counted as part of the overall qualification grade.

Qualification Grade

To gain an overall grade for the qualification, if all four units are undertaken, the marks are calculated by weighting the Speaking % at 0.2, Listening % at 0.2, Reading % at 0.3 and Writing % at 0.3.

The resulting marks are added together and graded as per the table below:

Distinction	80% and above
Merit	65-79%
Pass	51-64%
Refer	50% or less

Referrals

If a learner is referred on any or all of the units, any units that have been passed in the examination series will be banked, meaning that only the unit(s) that have been referred will have to be undertaken again in future series within the three-year period. Learners may resit the examination(s) in any future examination series. There is no limit to the number of times that a learner may resit any examination, although resit fees are applicable for each attempt.

4.4 Curriculum Topics

Topics that could be covered in class include:

- Self and family
- Your home
- Own local area
- Education
- Free-time interests
- Entertainment
- Travel
- Personal relationships
- Health and hygiene
- Going shopping
- Food and drink
- Public services
- Places
- Weather
- Measures and shapes.

At Advanced and Proficiency levels additional topics could include:

- News and politics
- Local and national affairs
- International issues.

It should be noted that the complexity of the topics will increase in line with the level of study. At all levels learners must be able to demonstrate telephone conversation and letter writing conventions.

5 Standard of Skills

5.1 Listening

Beginner Level

At this level, the learner will be able to follow speech which is carefully articulated and delivered at a slow speed. Long pauses and repetition will allow the learner to process the information. The learner will be able to follow short conversations in simple, everyday situations about self, family and immediate surroundings. They will be able to pick up the gist of the relationships between the speakers. They will follow short questions, simple directions and explanations, being able to extract key information from a conversation to enable them to complete a simple task. They will be able to understand simple questions, statements, single step instructions and short narratives where the speech is clearly and slowly spoken.

They will use stress and intonation to identify feelings and attitudes. The learner will recognise simple vocabulary and very basic phrases concerning self, family and familiar surroundings. They will extract key words, numbers and spellings from short statements, questions and explanations.

Improver Level

The learner will 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. They will be able to understand simple questions, statements, instructions, directions and explanations, and be able to identify mood, feelings and attitudes as well as opinions by recognising stress and intonation in the speaker's voice.

The learner will understand high frequency vocabulary and basic phrases relating to own life and experiences in straightforward, familiar formal and informal exchanges. The learner will be able to understand the main ideas in short simple messages, directions, instructions, explanations and short narratives. They will extract key words, numbers and spellings from announcements and messages.

Intermediate Level

At this level, learners will be able to understand spoken English which is relatively slowly delivered and clearly enunciated. They should be able to understand short narratives, conversations, instructions, directions and explanations. The contexts will be familiar and both formal and informal. They should be able to identify the function of the spoken information (see the functional use of language within the grammar section) and also the main points, purpose and speakers. They should be able to extract key information from media broadcasts on familiar topics.

They should be able to recognise stress and intonation in order to follow discourse alongside feelings, emotions, attitudes and opinions. They should understand high

frequency vocabulary and expressions relating to familiar topics and should be starting to recognise these in less familiar situations.

Independent User Level

At this level, the learner will be able to understand spoken English delivered at normal speed. They will be able to follow and understand a range of types of spoken information including both formal and informal interactions in familiar contexts. This will include conversations, narratives, explanations, descriptions and instructions. Some of these interactions may include idiomatic expressions.

The learner should be able to extract key information from media broadcasts, lectures and presentations using topics from everyday life, work or academic or vocational study. They should be able to 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.

They should be able to understand a wider range of vocabulary including less frequently used vocabulary and expressions and recognise the level of formality used by the speaker.

Advanced Level

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

Proficient Level

The learner will be able to understand virtually all spoken speech even when delivered at a fast speed. They will be able to understand complex conversations, narratives, sequences, descriptions, explanations and subtle arguments. They will understand a professional discussion, including those from the world of academia and will be able to extract and reproduce key information from a wide range of media on both abstract and concrete topics of general, academic or professional standard. They will be able to follow an argument, even when not structured clearly.

They will identify how subtle changes of intonation and stress can affect meaning and will be able to consistently understand the main ideas of complex, extended discourse, even if the topic is unfamiliar.

5.2 Reading

Beginner Level

The learner will understand short simple narratives and descriptions, single step instructions, simple directions and explanations. They will be able to identify the purpose and audience of texts where this is clear. The learner will find key information in simple short texts and understand the point of view where this is clear.

They will understand familiar names, words and phrases in simple texts related to everyday life, including social courtesies. They will understand isolated words, simple phrases and straightforward sentence structures to link clauses and structure time. They will understand that the use of capital letters and full stops in very simple sentences. They will be able to use layout conventions, common signs and symbols to recognise the different purposes of text.

Improver Level

The learner will be able to understand short simple narratives, descriptions, instructive texts and explanations on familiar subjects including those related to work and social life. They will be able to recognise the purpose of texts in both formal and informal contexts where the purpose and intended audience is clear. They will identify key information from short texts on everyday topics and follow a line of clearly expressed argument. The learner will be able to follow the gist of simple informal letters, routine formal letters and short newspaper articles, using layout and signs and symbols to support. They will understand common signs and notices found in public places.

The learner will 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.

Intermediate Level

The learner should be able to extract details in narratives, instructions, descriptions and explanations. This will include biographies, articles or discursive texts. All should be on familiar topics. Texts must be more than one paragraph, some beginning to be longer and more complex in structure, but still straightforward in context. The texts may be real-life and both formal and informal in tone. At this level, learners should understand the purpose of texts, even where the purpose is not explicit. They should be able to understand feelings and opinions in informal texts.

They should understand words related to personal interest, work, leisure and study. Learners can 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. The use of markers to indicate sequence, addition and contrast should be used to build up meaning, including the use of paragraphing to structure a text.

Independent User Level

At this level, the learner should be using 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. They should be able to 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. The learners will be able to understand articles and reports on current affairs which demonstrate the writer's point of view or opinions.

The learner will 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. Learners will be able to understand the register of texts including those conveying emotion.

Advanced Level

The learner at this level will understand long complex texts, clearly identifying the distinctions in style and purpose. They should be able to extract the main ideas of these complex texts and draw information from any part of a text or from a range of texts. Language used in the texts may be used to create different sophisticated effects and may be technical or specialist. Texts may be concerned with contemporary issues in which the writer does not always clearly make their viewpoint known. The learner should be able to identify the nuances of attitude, even where opinions are implied rather than explicit.

Learners should be able to understand the role of register even in emotive contexts and should be able to recognise how textual features are used to achieve different purposes. They should recognise and understand a range of logical and sequence markers and complex grammatical structures.

Proficient Level

The learners will be able to understand with ease virtually all types of texts including those with complex structures. They will be able to 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. The learners will be able to summarise information from a range of texts or using a range of texts. They will be able to 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.

The learners will be able to recognise how textual features are used to achieve purpose and will be able to understand how the full range of discourse markers can be adapted to the context and register.

5.3 Writing

Beginner Level

A learner at this level will be able to fill in simple forms with personal details and communicate simple information. They will be able to write short notes, cards and messages using very basic personal information such as where they live, what they like and what they do. They will be able to write simple descriptions, single step instructions and directions in familiar everyday contexts and express likes, preferences and dislikes on familiar topics.

They will be able to 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. They will spell correctly personal key words and familiar words and check what is written for basic errors. They will be able to identify simple errors in the use of punctuation, grammar and spelling. They will use simple grammar structures to write short sentences and use a basic range of vocabulary to deal with familiar topics. They will be able to write a short sequence of simple sentences to form a basic message.

Improver Level

At this level a learner will have begun to compose simple texts with the start of understanding of purpose and audience. The learner will be able to complete more complex forms which require choices to be made. They will be able to compose a short letter, descriptions, explanations, instructions and directions in both formal and informal contexts. They will express their opinions clearly.

They will be able to correct basic grammar, punctuation and spelling errors in written text. The learner will spell correctly the majority of words used for personal detail and familiar common words. Question marks, commas in lists and capital letters will be used accurately and simple and compound sentences will be constructed with a reasonable degree of accuracy. The learner will use a limited range of vocabulary to deal with simple and familiar contexts, using basic linking words to link a short sequence of sentences.

Intermediate Level

At this level a learner should be able to write a straightforward text or informal letter on a range of familiar topics. This will include an understanding of the features of informal and formal letters. Other texts may include narrative, descriptions, explanations, instructions, reports and articles. They should be able to express opinions simply with justification for them. They should be able to use punctuation accurately and spell the majority of common words and key words related to work, leisure and study. They should be able to proof read work, correcting errors.

At this level, the learner should be starting to have an awareness of the reader and adapting their approach to meet their needs. They should be able to sequence information properly using grammatical structures to support this, including the use of conjunctions, connectives and discourse markers.

Independent User Level

At this level the learner will be able to write coherently on a range of topics, linking key ideas effectively. This will include descriptions, arguments, formal letters and reports and narratives including both real and imaginary people and events. They will use correct punctuation on formal and informal writing for effect and to enhance meaning. They will spell a wide range of words from work, study and everyday life. Overall grammar will be correct, although some errors may still occur where the learner is attempting to use complex structures.

The learner will have an understanding of the purpose of the writing and the readers who will use the information contained in the text. They will 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.

Advanced Level

At this level, texts should be well structured and detailed. The subject will be complex and learners should be able to communicate ideas, impressions, feeling and opinion clearly. They should be able to write complex narratives and descriptions and formal letters, reports or articles to cover a range of functions, including those requiring tact and diplomacy. They should be able to present well-rounded arguments, emphasising and expanding on key points.

All punctuation marks should be used correctly and effectively. Spelling of words used in work, study and everyday life should be accurate and may also include some commonly used technical vocabulary. Vocabulary should be chosen to meet the purpose of the text and the reader and idiomatic expressions will be used appropriately and naturally. A wide range of complex structures, including grammatical structures will be utilised at this level and ideas will be organised and linked using linking words and cohesive structures. Learners will be able to apply the correct register dependent on the context and audience.

Proficient Level

At this level, the learner will be able to produce well-structured texts on complex or abstract subjects. The text will be smoothly flowing and will demonstrate the use of cogent arguments. They will be able to compose formal letters, reports and articles on complex subjects and will demonstrate a confident natural manner to produce a consistent style relevant to the purpose.

All punctuation will be accurate and effectively deployed to enhance meaning. Spelling of words used in more specialised contexts will be accurate and grammatical structures will be maintained consistently. A wide range of vocabulary will be used as well as idiomatic expressions. A wide range of linguistic devices will be used to create coherent and cohesive writing, using textual structures which include linguistic markers to enable the reader to understand significant points and opinions.

5.4 Speaking

Beginner Level

The learner will have a very basic repertoire of vocabulary and very simple phrases related to personal details and very straightforward situations. A few simple phrases and sentence patterns are memorised to give straightforward information. The learner can manage to 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. The learner can ask and answer questions about personal details. Communication is based on repetition, rephrasing and correction. Groups of words can be linked using very basic linear connectors such as 'and' and 'then'.

Improver Level

The learner will 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. They will be able to 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. They will be able to give and follow simple explanations, instructions and directions, asking and answering questions to clarify information. They will be able to give short descriptions and tell short stories expressing simple feelings and opinions using both simple and compound sentence structures.

Intermediate Level

The learner will be able to interact competently if not always accurately in everyday familiar situations. They will be able to communicate personal information, opinions and ideas and respond to those of others in a variety of social situations. They will be able to exchange feelings and opinions and be able to use extended speech to tell a story, describe or explain how to do something. They should be able to contribute relevant points to a simple discussion, using a good control of grammatical structures, with any errors not impeding understanding.

The learner will be able to pronounce the sounds of English sufficiently well to be understood and will have begun to demonstrate a reasonable control of stress and intonation patterns. They should be able to use past tense accurately and a range of vocabulary and expression to deal with familiar situations and topics. They should be able to adopt some degree of formality and initiate and follow the norms of turn-taking. They should be able to speak without undue hesitation unless searching for information or vocabulary.

Independent User Level

The learner will be able to speak with a degree of fluency and spontaneity making sustained interaction possible without undue strain. The learner will be able to take turns in a conversation, demonstrating the use of appropriate phrases to interrupt or deal with disruptions, adapting formality to the situation. The learner will be able to 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. They will be able to use extended speech to tell a story or describe, explain, give directions or express opinions.

The learner will 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. Accuracy will be relatively high without errors that impede meaning. The learner will demonstrate a sufficient range of vocabulary to be able to add detail to descriptions and to highlight emotions in arguments or when relating personal events. They will produce some complex sentences although there may still be some searching for the right vocabulary or expression to use.

Advanced Level

The learner will 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. They will be able to communicate in all social situations including those requiring tact and diplomacy. They will be able to engage in discussion to express and elicit opinion, persuade someone to a point of view, try to reach agreement or perform a specific task. The learner will be able to speak on complex subjects integrating sub-themes and developing key points to a suitable conclusion.

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

Proficient Level

The learner will be able to display a comprehensive and reliable mastery of the language with no sign of having to restrict what is said. They will deal with a very wide range of

topics and situations including the discussion of contemporary issues. Arguments and opinions are defended and justified, whilst persuasive techniques are used confidently to persuade someone to a point of view or to reach an agreement. Sophisticated explanations, descriptions and narratives on a complex subject, which convey subtleties of meaning and integrate sub-themes, are brought to an appropriate conclusion.

Pronunciation is articulated correctly, using stress and intonation patterns naturally to highlight, emphasise, and modify meaning with consistent grammatical control of complex language.

The learner will 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. Speech will be clearly flowing and well-structured with a skilful interaction within turn taking.

5.5. 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.

NB. 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**.

Beginner Level (A1)

- **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***

Verb forms

Present reference:

- simple present tense of be/have/do
- simple present and present continuous form of common regular verbs
- *have got*.

- simple present with no time focus
- present continuous to express continuity

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 much, how many, how old*
- 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, why, how, which**
- **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
- **definite article**
- **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
- **order of adjectives**
- **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

Personal environment

Learners should be able to ask for and give basic personal information. They should be able to use a limited range of language, mainly memorised phrases, to convey information about people, places and things. They should be able to give short, simple descriptions of daily routines and give straightforward narratives to describe events that happen in the present tense.

Expressing thoughts and feelings

Learners should be able to express likes and dislikes. They should be able to thank someone. They should be able to say whether they can do something or not.

Making things happen

Learners must be able to give and follow single step instructions. They should also be able to ask people to do something.

Social contact

Learners should be able to introduce people including self and use basic greeting and leave taking expressions. They should be able to ask how people are and react to news. They may ask someone to repeat something or show lack of understanding through the use of non-verbal cues.

Improver Level (A2)

- **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**

Verb forms

Present reference:

- simple present with no time focus
- present continuous to express continuity
- **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 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
- 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**
- **to + infinitive to express purpose**
- **common phrasal verbs and position of object pronouns, such as / *looked it up***
- **simple reported/embedded statements and questions**
- **question tags using all verbs**
- **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*** (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)

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

Personal environment

Learners should be able to ask for and give personal information. They should be able to use descriptive language to convey information about people, places and things. They should be able to give simple descriptions of daily routines and give straightforward narratives to describe past events.

Expressing thoughts and feelings

Learners should be able to agree or disagree with other people's views. They should give their own feelings and opinions about familiar topics and give reasons for these. They should be able to express likes and dislikes and preferences. They should be able to ask for permission to do something and apologise for something they have done or said. They should be able to thank someone and express their wants or needs. They should be able to say whether they understand or not.

Making things happen

Learners must be able to give and follow instructions and advice. They should be able to ask for and give help or for someone to do something. They should also be able to give or decline an invitation. They must be able to persuade someone to take a particular course of action.

Social contact

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

Intermediate Level (B1)

Learners must be able to achieve the standards of A2 as well as the standards for Intermediate level plus they may be exposed to the standards at Independent User level (B2), but will not be tested on it. The standards for the level above are in bold text.

Simple sentences

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

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 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

Verb forms

Present/Past reference:

- Present perfect with *since/for/ever/never, yet/already, just*
- **Present perfect continuous**

Past reference:

- *used to* for regular actions in the past
- past continuous
- **past perfect**
-

Future reference:

- Future simple verb forms, NP + *will*

Other:

- 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
- question tags using all verbs appropriate at the level
- contracted forms appropriate to this level
- **simple passive**
- **use of 2nd and 3rd conditional**
- **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 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**

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* 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, eg *all my books*
- **wider range of noun phrases with pre and post modification**
- **word order of determiners e.g. *all my books***

Pronouns As A2

Possessives As 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***

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

Personal environment

As A2 level plus:

The learner should be able to speak about past and present actions. They should be able to compare information, things and people. They should be able to report facts and actions.

Expressing thoughts, feelings and attitudes

As A2 level plus:

The learner should be able to express surprise, fear or worry or lack of these feelings. They should be able to reassure and express regret. They should be able to express moral obligation.

Making things happen

As A2 level plus:

Learners should be able to ask for, respond to or reject suggestions with reasons for actions. They should be able to make and agree plans and arrangements making compromises and prohibiting someone from doing something. They should be able to make a complaint.

Social contact

As A2 level plus:

Learners should be able to give an example to prove a point or emphasise a point. They should encourage others to continue or indicate that they wish to speak, continue to speak or finish speaking. They should be able to sum up a discussion or conversation.

Independent User Level (B2)

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 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 level

Verb forms

Present/Past reference:

- present perfect continuous
- **all verb forms active and passive**

Past reference:

- past perfect

Other:

- simple passive
- use of 2nd and 3rd conditional
- verbs + (object) _ gerund or infinitive such as *would like someone to do something*, + *suggest doing something*
- 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
- **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 and forms with similar meaning:

- *ought to* (obligation)
- negative of *need* and *have to* 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 A2

Possessives As A2

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

- definite, indefinite and zero article with both countable and uncountable nouns in a range of uses

Determiners As Intermediate level

Adjectives

- comparisons with *fewer* and *less*
- collocation of adjective + preposition such as *responsible for*

Adverbs

- adverbial phrases of degree, extent, probability
- comparative and superlative of adverbs

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
- **accurate use of all punctuation**

Spelling

- the correct spelling of words used in work, studies and daily life
- **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

Personal environment

As Intermediate level plus:

A learner should be able to narrate and describe past, future and present events. They should be able to report facts and actions and give descriptions and specifications.

Expressing thoughts, feelings and attitudes

As Intermediate level plus:

A learner should be able to express agreement or disagreement with someone, either denying or agreeing but reluctantly. They should be able to concede a point or argument, expressing views and feelings with reasons to back them up. They should be able to refer to something, someone or an action is remembered or forgotten. They should be able to comment on degrees of possibility, certainty or probability. They should be able to remind someone to do something. They should be able to express higher level emotions and feelings such as doubt, incredulity and bewilderment. They should be able to comment on or question someone's ability, obligation or permissibility of doing something and to grant permission to do a task. They should be able to express own and ask about other's feelings including indifference, (dis)pleasure and (un)happiness, disappointment and gratitude. They should express and ask about emotions such as fear, worry, anxiety and

surprise including expressing empathy or sympathy for a situation or person. They should be able to express and ask about pain, anguish and suffering and express relief, fatigue and resignation.

Making things happen

As Intermediate level plus:

A learner should be able to agree to or reject suggestions with a reason/alternative, refusing to do something or expressing defiance. They should be able to plead with someone to get something done.

Social contact

As Intermediate level plus:

The learner should be able to give or ask for a definition of something, confirming own or other's understanding. They should be able to ask someone to repeat all or part of something.

Advanced Level (C1)

Learners may be exposed to the grammar required for the level above, but will not be tested on it. The grammar for the level above is 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:

- *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 level

Adjectives As Independent User level

Adverbs As Independent User level

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 work, studies and daily life including familiar technical words
- **the correct spelling of words used in more specialized contexts (such as business, academia, 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

Personal environment

As Independent User level but using more complex grammar and language.

Expressing thoughts, feelings and attitudes

As Independent User level plus:

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

Making things happen

As Independent User level but using more complex grammar and language.

Social contact

As Independent User level plus:

A learner should be able to give and respond to constructive criticism.

Proficient Level (C2)

Grammar

At this level the majority of skills will have been mastered at lower levels, however there still remain a few skills to be mastered and these are outlined below.

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
- 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

Adjectives As Independent User

Adverbs As Independent User

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 specialized 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

Personal environment

As Advanced User level but using more complex grammar and language.

Expressing thoughts, feelings and attitudes

As Advanced User level but using more complex grammar and language.

Making things happen

As Advanced User level but using more complex grammar and language.

Social contact

As Advanced User level but using more complex grammar and language.

Appendix 1 - Resource Suggestions

- Film footage and reports
- Short videos or audio clips
- Newspapers and magazines
- Leaflets
- NIACE Citizenship Materials

Note: *this is not an exhaustive list*

Review Date 31/07/2019

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