



HANDBOOK

ENGLISH

B1·B2



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0 Introduction

telc English B1-B2 is a standardised dual-level examination which measures general language competence across two levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)* using a task-based, communicative approach.

The examination contains a variety of tasks to assess learners' reading, writing, speaking and listening skills at levels B1 and B2. Both candidates who are still at B1 level and those who have reached B2 level have the chance to complete the examination successfully, which is especially encouraging for mixed-ability groups of learners. They have the additional advantage of being able to find out exactly what their linguistic strengths are because upon completion of the examination, all candidates receive a breakdown of their skills for three separate areas (1. Speaking; 2. Writing; 3. Listening/Reading/Language Elements), together with the overall level they have achieved.

About telc – language tests

telc stands for “The European Language Certificates,” and *telc – language tests* is the name under which telc GmbH, the non-profit subsidiary of the German Adult Education Association (Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband, DVV), develops, constructs and distributes approximately 60 examinations currently in ten European languages.

The all-encompassing guideline for the telc programme of examinations and our yardstick for quality-orientated testing is the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*. All telc examinations are consistently aligned to this external reference system.

telc – language tests is a member of the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) and as such is committed to upholding its quality profile. All telc examinations are measured against ALTE's internationally recognised standards. This begins with the careful construction of each test version. Tried and tested statistical methods are used on tests-in-construction (pre-testing) and tests-in-action in order to find out the suitability and level of difficulty for each individual task and to differentiate between the candidates with the required amount of selectivity. telc's quality control continues with informing all involved in the actual examination and culminates in the strict administration of the test itself. The objective validity of the rating scale and the evaluation criteria are further essential benchmarks, as is the reliable communication of the results to candidates and examination centres.

This commitment to excellence demonstrates that *telc – language tests* strives towards the highest possible standards in all areas of language learning, teaching and assessment. It promotes the quality of modern communicative foreign language education and supports the Council of Europe's goals of multilingualism and integration, mutual understanding and mobility within Europe.

1 Background Information

1.1 Dual-level Examinations

This chapter will briefly explain how language skills are assessed over the two CEFR levels B1 and B2 and why it is important to develop this kind of evaluation carefully. While it might seem a simple solution just to award B1 for test takers who are slightly below B2, this is not how *telc English B1·B2* was constructed. The test development team made an extra effort by carefully defining two cut-off scores, one for B1 and one for B2, instead of the one cut-off score typical for single-level examinations.

telc's aims when developing this test were to

- provide successful candidates with a valid certificate either at level B1 or at level B2,
- achieve this objective within a manageable time frame for the actual examination; i. e., with as few test items as possible,
- give all candidates a profile of their abilities as well as certifying the overall level achieved.

In order to fulfill the second aim, the subtests Listening, Reading and Language Elements are counted together for the final result of the test. Thus 59 items can be taken into account when determining whether a test taker has reached level B1 or B2 in the receptive skills. Each subtest seen by itself (with 23 or 18 items at the most) would not provide the necessary amount of information about the test taker's ability. Therefore, if the results for Listening, Reading and Language Elements were to be reported separately, these subtests would have to include many more items. Considerations of time versus cost as well as practicability led to the decision to combine the three subtests. The productive skills Writing and Speaking are assessed independently, however.

This means that *telc English B1·B2* has three parts which are evaluated separately:

- Listening/Reading/Language Elements
- Writing
- Speaking

The level achieved for each of these parts can be either "B2", "B1" or "below B1". The methods used for this evaluation are explained below.

The B1·B2 test cannot measure a candidate's ability below the CEFR level B1, so a result of this nature is referred to as being "below B1".

Listening/Reading/Language Elements

In this part candidates are awarded one point for each item. The result is graded as follows:

- 43–59 points: B2
- 27–42 points: B1
- 0–26 points: below B1

How were these cut-off scores defined? In the process of test development, different qualitative and quantitative methods were applied.

First of all, the relevant descriptors of the CEFR were analysed and used to develop the first test items. In this first phase, the expertise of experienced teachers and item writers for the relevant levels was an invaluable instrument for fine-tuning the items. As soon as the first draft of the mock examination was available, a more formal type of expert judgment was required. The aim was to determine whether the items had the necessary validity and could be used in pre-testing.

A benchmarking seminar was held for the experts, applying some of the methods laid out by the *Manual for Relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference* of the Council of Europe. The results of this qualitative judgment had to be corroborated by quantitative data. Pre-testing was therefore done in several stages, starting on a small scale for first adjustments and proceeding to statistically valid numbers of candidates (about 200 are needed for a test version). In order to determine the difficulty of prospective B1 and B2 items, anchor items with known positions on the CEFR scale were used. This made it possible to position the new items within the CEFR system of competence levels.

When creating new test versions, items of the same levels of difficulty as those defined during the phase of test development have to be used. This is ensured by means of continual pre-testing as well as post-test analysis. It is especially important for the number of B1 and B2 items to remain the same in the different versions, thus providing the same evaluation for each test taker. However, it is not specified exactly which item has to be on level B1 or B2, allowing for a certain amount of flexibility.

Writing

Productive skills require open-ended test formats. These need to be developed in a different way to the receptive tasks.

While the task itself is the focus point for the test taker and has to be constructed carefully, it is even more important to have rating criteria that allow standardised judgment of the response in a manner relevant to the test specifications.

For the examination *telc English B1-B2*, the above-mentioned standardisation as laid down in the Council of Europe *Manual* was achieved with the help of a benchmarking session done with samples of written production. After a familiarisation and calibration phase, the participants of the benchmarking session were able to judge whether writing samples were situated on level B1 or B2 (or another one). These samples now serve as a point of reference for rater training.

In order to determine the cut-off scores between the CEFR levels B1 and B2, the test was constructed in such a way as to restrict the vocabulary of the input material to B1, whilst producing a communicative situation which allows for the test takers to respond at either level.

As far as the rating (assessing) of written performance is concerned, it is necessary to distinguish between appropriateness in regard to content and in regard to linguistic competence.

Task Management: Appropriateness in achieving the given task and addressing the guiding points, accuracy in conveying the communicative aim.

- Communicative Design: Range of register and language functions, achievement of cohesion and coherence
- Accuracy: Correctness and control of grammar, orthography and punctuation at an appropriate level
- Vocabulary: Range and control of vocabulary used

- For each of these four criteria the rater has to decide whether the candidate's performance is equivalent to the CEFR level B1 or B2 and whether it corresponds more to the upper or to the lower end of the relevant level.
- In order to ensure that raters are equipped to make this kind of decision, it is necessary to qualify them by conducting rater training workshops on a regular basis. In the course of these refresher courses, each prospective rater must demonstrate the ability to assess candidates' performances adequately using the above-mentioned criteria.

Although the rating is not done by means of a point system, the raters' individual decisions must be transformed into point values in order to make a transparent and practicable evaluation possible. The rating for the subtest Writing is expressed on a scale of 0–20 points for every test taker, and the level achieved for this skill is reported back to the candidate using the known categories: B2, B1 or below B1.

Speaking

When developing the Speaking subtest, the question had to be addressed whether – and if so, how – participants with varying levels of competence could all be given fair conditions in a pair examination. The test development team and their advisers decided on careful consideration to retain the successful pair format but to give the examiners a more active role than is the case with other telc examinations. Should the tasks, which are deliberately kept as simple as possible, threaten to overwhelm a weaker candidate or not allow a more able candidate to demonstrate language competence at an advanced level, then the examiner can intervene and influence the direction of the discourse. Prospective oral examiners undergo a qualifying process which covers matters such as how to behave during the examination and how the candidates' performances should be evaluated, using standardised samples. The sample material originated in benchmarking sessions following the method outlined in the Council of Europe *Manual*.

The Three Speaking Tasks

The three oral tasks require a test taker to demonstrate communicative competence in different ways. They include monologues and dialogues and call upon the candidate to converse both with a native speaker and with another learner of the target language. The language functions concerned include giving and exchanging information, describing and planning.

As in the Writing subtest, the ensuing complex examining situation must be divided for the purposes of standardised evaluation into content-based and language-based appropriateness. The following assessment criteria have been laid down:

- Task Management: Appropriateness in dealing with the various types of tasks
- Pronunciation and Intonation: Ability to speak in a readily comprehensible manner
- Fluency: Ability to maintain a natural flow of speech without undue hesitation
- Accuracy: Production of grammatically correct and thus comprehensible utterances
- Vocabulary: Mastery of an appropriate range of lexical items

As in the Writing subtest, these criteria were developed using the corresponding CEFR scales.

In recognition of its complexity, the oral examination carries 100 points, which are awarded for the various subtests in accordance with the rater's assignment of performance to the relevant CEFR criteria. As with the Writing subtest, the level achieved for this skill is reported back to the candidate as one of three possible outcomes: B2, B1 or below B1.

Determining the Final Score

Whether a candidate receives a *telc English B2 Certificate* or a *telc English B1 Certificate* depends on the partial results achieved in the subtests Listening, Reading, Language Elements, Writing and Speaking. One of the minimum requirements for a certificate is that a B1 or a B2 level must be obtained in the Speaking subtest. Candidates assessed as having skills below level B1 do not receive a certificate.

B1 Certificate

Candidates who are assessed at B1 level or above in the Speaking subtest and in one of the subtests for Listening, Reading, Language Elements or Writing are awarded a *telc English B1 Certificate*.

B2 Certificate

Candidates who are assessed at B2 level in the Speaking subtest and in one of the subtests for Listening, Reading, Language Elements or Writing are awarded a *telc English B2 Certificate*.

1.2 Global English

telc English B1-B2 tests English in an authentic way. What does that mean in terms of varieties of English, when most of our learners and test takers do not live in a country where English is the official language? Focussing on just one kind of language use, such as British English, seems to be a rather narrow approach in today's globalised world. Therefore, *telc English B1-B2* offers English in the most common varieties, including:

- British English
- American English
- Australian English
- Indian English

Thus not only the spoken accent varies, but also communicative situations from different countries have to be dealt with.

Taking the test takers' level of language competence into account, these linguistic and cultural differences are, of course, very subtle. Whatever the accent heard in the recordings and whatever the specific cultural setting of any of the tasks, they will always be understandable for a learner at levels B1 and B2. However, dealing with regional varieties becomes increasingly important at level B2 and upwards, and even on the lower competence levels a basic understanding of the fact that language is never uniform should exist.

This international perspective reflects the experience which today's learners will face when communicating in English. Whether they go on a trip to London, for example, and are immediately confronted with a large number of speakers for whom English is not their native language, or whether they meet various speakers in a non-English environment, learners always have to adjust to different varieties of the language.

telc English B1-B2 not only endeavours to reflect this reality of language use, but also to encourage teachers to accustom their learners to a range of authentic "Englishes" even at an early stage.

1.3 ALTE Minimum Standards

telc has been a regular member of the *Association of Language Testers in Europe* (ALTE) since 1995. The ALTE standards of excellence are applied to every telc examination. Throughout its development, every test phase is calibrated and monitored according to these criteria.

The minimum standards for establishing quality profiles in ALTE examinations are:

Test construction

1. The examination is based on a theoretical construct, e.g. on a model of communicative competence.
2. You can describe the purpose and context of use of the examination, and the population for which the examination is appropriate.
3. You provide criteria for selection and training of test constructors and expert judgement is involved both in test construction, and in the review and revision of the examinations.
4. Parallel examinations are comparable across different administrations in terms of content, stability, consistency and grade boundaries.
5. If you make a claim that the examination is linked to an external reference system (e.g. Common European Framework), then you can provide evidence of alignment to this system.

Administration & Logistics

6. All centres are selected to administer your examination according to clear, transparent, established procedures, and have access to regulations about how to do so.
7. Examination papers are delivered in excellent condition and by secure means of transport to the authorized examination centres, your examination administration system provides for secure and traceable handling of all examination documents, and confidentiality of all system procedures can be guaranteed.
8. The examination administration system has appropriate support systems (e.g. phone hotline, web services etc.).
9. You adequately protect the security and confidentiality of results and certificates, and data relating to them, in line with current data protection legislation, and candidates are informed of their rights to access this data.
10. The examination system provides support for candidates with special needs.

Marking & Grading

11. Marking is sufficiently accurate and reliable for purpose and type of examination.
12. You can document and explain how marking is carried out and reliability estimated, and how data regarding achievement of raters of writing and speaking performances is collected and analysed.

Test analysis

13. You collect and analyse data on an adequate and representative sample of candidates and can be confident that their achievement is a result of the skills measured in the examination and not influenced by factors like L1, country of origin, gender, age and ethnic origin.
14. Item-level data (e.g. for computing the difficulty, discrimination, reliability and standard errors of measurement of the examination) is collected from an adequate sample of candidates and analysed.

Communication with stakeholders

15. The examination administration system communicates the results of the examinations to candidates and to examination centres (e.g. schools) promptly and clearly.
16. You provide information to stakeholders on the appropriate context, purpose and use of the examination, on its content, and on the overall reliability of the results of the examination.
17. You provide suitable information to stakeholders to help them interpret results and use them appropriately.

1.4 Relevant CEFR Scales

The CEFR provides essential information about the skills needed to successfully complete the examination *telc English B1-B2*. The scales in the following chart and the descriptors they include are incorporated into the examination, although the amount and intensity of their use varies. Since the examination covers two levels of competence, the descriptors for both levels B1 and B2 (including the plus levels B1+ and B2+) have been listed below. CEFR descriptors which are not relevant for this examination have been omitted.

GLOBAL SCALE

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 specialization. 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, leisure, school, 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.

LISTENING

OVERALL LISTENING COMPREHENSION	
B2	<p>Can understand standard spoken language, live or broadcast, on both familiar and unfamiliar topics normally encountered in personal, social, academic or vocational life. Only extreme background noise, inadequate discourse structure and/or idiomatic usage influences the ability to understand.</p> <p>Can understand the main ideas of propositionally and linguistically complex speech on both concrete and abstract topics delivered in a standard dialect, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation.</p> <p>Can follow extended speech and complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar, and the direction of the talk is sign-posted by explicit markers.</p>
B1	<p>Can understand straightforward factual information about common everyday or job related topics, identifying both general messages and specific details, provided speech is clearly articulated in a generally familiar accent.</p> <p>Can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure etc., including short narratives.</p>
UNDERSTANDING CONVERSATION BETWEEN NATIVE SPEAKERS	
B2	<p>Can keep up with an animated conversation between native speakers.</p> <p>Can with some effort catch much of what is said around him/her, but may find it difficult to participate effectively in discussion with several native speakers who do not modify their language in any way.</p>
B1	<p>Can generally follow the main points of extended discussion around him/her, provided speech is clearly articulated in standard dialect.</p>
LISTENING AS A MEMBER OF A LIVE AUDIENCE	
B2	<p>Can follow the essentials of lectures, talks and reports and other forms of academic/professional presentation which are propositionally and linguistically complex.</p>
B1	<p>Can follow a lecture or talk within his/her own field, provided the subject matter is familiar and the presentation straightforward and clearly structured.</p> <p>Can follow in outline straightforward short talks on familiar topics provided these are delivered in clearly articulated standard speech.</p>
LISTENING TO ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS	
B2	<p>Can understand announcements and messages on concrete and abstract topics spoken in standard dialect at normal speed.</p>
B1	<p>Can understand simple technical information, such as operating instructions for everyday equipment. Can follow detailed directions.</p>
LISTENING TO AUDIO MEDIA AND RECORDINGS	
B2	<p>Can understand recordings in standard dialect likely to be encountered in social, professional or academic life and identify speaker viewpoints and attitudes as well as the information content.</p> <p>Can understand most radio documentaries and most other recorded or broadcast audio material delivered in standard dialect and can identify the speaker's mood, tone, etc.</p>

B1	<p>Can understand the information content of the majority of recorded or broadcast audio material on topics of personal interest delivered in clear standard speech.</p> <p>Can understand the main points of radio news bulletins and simpler recorded material about familiar subjects delivered relatively slowly and clearly.</p>
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READING

OVERALL READING COMPREHENSION	
B2	Can read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, and using appropriate reference sources selectively. Has a broad active reading vocabulary, but may experience some difficulty with lowfrequency idioms.
B1	Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to his/her field of interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension.

READING CORRESPONDENCE	
B2	Can read correspondence relating to his/her field of interest and readily grasp the essential meaning.
B1	Can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters well enough to correspond regularly with a pen friend.

READING FOR ORIENTATION	
B2	<p>Can scan quickly through long and complex texts, locating relevant details.</p> <p>Can quickly identify the content and relevance of news items, articles and reports on a wide range of professional topics, deciding whether closer study is worthwhile.</p>
B1	<p>Can scan longer texts in order to locate desired information, and gather information from different parts of a text, or from different texts in order to fulfil a specific task.</p> <p>Can find and understand relevant information in everyday material, such as letters, brochures and short official documents.</p>

READING FOR INFORMATION AND ARGUMENT	
B2	<p>Can obtain information, ideas and opinions from highly specialised sources within his/her field.</p> <p>Can understand specialised articles outside his/her field, provided he/she can use a dictionary occasionally to confirm his/her interpretation of terminology.</p> <p>Can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints.</p>
B1	<p>Can identify the main conclusions in clearly signalled argumentative texts.</p> <p>Can recognise the line of argument in the treatment of the issue presented, though not necessarily in detail.</p> <p>Can recognise significant points in straightforward newspaper articles on familiar subjects.</p>

READING INSTRUCTIONS	
B2	Can understand lengthy, complex instructions in his field, including details on conditions and warnings, provided he/she can reread difficult sections.
B1	Can understand clearly written, straightforward instructions for a piece of equipment.

WRITING

OVERALL WRITTEN PRODUCTION	
B2	Can write clear, detailed texts on a variety of subjects related to his field of interest, synthesising and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources.
B1	Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence.

OVERALL WRITTEN INTERACTION	
B2	Can express news and views effectively in writing, and relate to those of others.
B1	Can convey information and ideas on abstract as well as concrete topics, check information and ask about or explain problems with reasonable precision. Can write personal letters and notes asking for or conveying simple information of immediate relevance, getting across the point he/she feels to be important.

CORRESPONDENCE	
B2	Can write letters conveying degrees of emotion and highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences and commenting on the correspondent's news and views.
B1	Can write personal letters giving news and expressing thoughts about abstract or cultural topics such as music, films. Can write personal letters describing experiences, feelings and events in some detail.

CREATIVE WRITING	
B2	Can write clear, detailed descriptions of real or imaginary events and experiences marking the relationship between ideas in clear connected text, and following established conventions of the genre concerned. Can write clear, detailed descriptions on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest. Can write a review of a film, book or play.
B1	Can write straightforward, detailed descriptions on a range of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest. Can write accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions in simple connected text. Can write a description of an event, a recent trip – real or imagined. Can narrate a story.

SPEAKING

OVERALL SPOKEN INTERACTION	
B2	<p>Can use the language fluently, accurately and effectively on a wide range of general, academic, vocational or leisure topics, marking clearly the relationships between ideas. Can communicate spontaneously with good grammatical control without much sign of having to restrict what he/she wants to say, adopting a level of formality appropriate to the circumstances.</p> <p>Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction, and sustained relationships with native speakers quite possible without imposing strain on either party. Can highlight the personal significance of events and experiences, account for and sustain views clearly by providing relevant explanations and arguments.</p>
B1	<p>Can communicate with some confidence on familiar routine and non-routine matters related to his/her interests and professional field. Can exchange, check and confirm information, deal with less routine situations and explain why something is a problem. Can express thoughts on more abstract, cultural topics such as films, books, music, etc.</p> <p>Can exploit a wide range of simple language to deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling. Can enter unprepared into conversation on familiar topics, express personal opinions and exchange information on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).</p>
OVERALL ORAL PRODUCTION	
B2	<p>Can give clear, systematically developed descriptions and presentations, with appropriate highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail.</p> <p>Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on a wide range of subjects related to his/her field of interest, expanding and supporting ideas with subsidiary points and relevant examples.</p>
B1	<p>Can reasonably fluently sustain a straightforward description of one of a variety of subjects within his/her field of interest, presenting it as a linear sequence of points.</p>
UNDERSTANDING A NATIVE SPEAKER INTERLOCUTOR	
B2	<p>Can understand in detail what is said to him/her in the standard spoken language even in a noisy environment.</p>
B1	<p>Can follow clearly articulated speech directed at him/her in everyday conversation, though will sometimes have to ask for repetition of particular words and phrases.</p>

CONVERSATION	
B2	<p>Can engage in extended conversation on most general topics in a clearly participatory fashion, even in a noisy environment.</p> <p>Can sustain relationships with native speakers without unintentionally amusing or irritating them or requiring them to behave other than they would with a native speaker.</p> <p>Can convey degrees of emotion and highlight the personal significance of events and experiences.</p>
B1	<p>Can enter unprepared into conversations on familiar topics.</p> <p>Can follow clearly articulated speech directed at him/her in everyday conversation, though will sometimes have to ask for repetition of particular words and phrases.</p> <p>Can maintain a conversation or discussion but may sometimes be difficult to follow when trying to say exactly what he/she would like to.</p> <p>Can express and respond to feelings such as surprise, happiness, sadness, interest and indifference.</p>
INFORMAL DISCUSSION (WITH FRIENDS)	
B2	<p>Can keep up with an animated discussion between native speakers.</p> <p>Can express his/her ideas and opinions with precision, present and respond to complex lines of argument convincingly.</p> <p>Can take an active part in informal discussion in familiar contexts, commenting, putting point of view clearly, evaluating alternative proposals and making and responding to hypotheses.</p> <p>Can with some effort catch much of what is said around him/her in discussion, but may find it difficult to participate effectively in discussion with several native speakers who do not modify their language in any way.</p> <p>Can account for and sustain his/her opinions in discussion by providing relevant explanations, arguments and comments.</p>
B1	<p>Can follow much of what is said around him/her on general topics provided interlocutors avoid very idiomatic usage and articulate clearly.</p> <p>Can express his/her thoughts about abstract or cultural topics such as music, films. Can explain why something is a problem.</p> <p>Can give brief comments on the views of others.</p> <p>Can compare and contrast alternatives, discussing what to do, where to go, who or which to choose etc.</p> <p>Can generally follow the main points in an informal discussion with friends provided speech is clearly articulated in standard dialect.</p> <p>Can give or seek personal views and opinions in discussing topics of interest.</p> <p>Can make his/her opinions and reactions understood as regards solutions to problems or practical questions of where to go, what to do, how to organise an event (e.g. an outing).</p> <p>Can express belief, opinion, agreement and disagreement politely.</p>

INFORMATION EXCHANGE	
B2	<p>Can understand and exchange complex information and advice on the full range of matters related to his/her occupational role.</p> <p>Can pass on detailed information reliably.</p> <p>Can give a clear, detailed description of how to carry out a procedure.</p> <p>Can synthesise and report information and arguments from a number of sources.</p>
B1	<p>Can exchange, check and confirm accumulated factual information on familiar routine and non-routine matters within his/her field with some confidence.</p> <p>Can describe how to do something, giving detailed instructions.</p> <p>Can summarise and give his or her opinion about a short story, article, talk, discussion, interview, or documentary and answer further questions of detail.</p> <p>Can find out and pass on straightforward factual information.</p> <p>Can ask for and follow detailed directions.</p> <p>Can obtain more detailed information.</p>
SUSTAINED MONOLOGUE (DESCRIBING EXPERIENCE)	
B2	<p>Can give clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to his/her field of interest.</p>
B1	<p>Can give straightforward descriptions on a variety of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest.</p> <p>Can reasonably fluently relate a straightforward narrative or description as a linear sequence of points. Can give detailed accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions.</p> <p>Can relate details of unpredictable occurrences, e.g. an accident.</p> <p>Can relate the plot of a book or film and describe his/her reactions.</p> <p>Can describe dreams, hopes and ambitions.</p> <p>Can describe events, real or imagined.</p> <p>Can narrate a story.</p>
ADDRESSING AUDIENCES	
B2	<p>Can give a clear, systematically developed presentation, with highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail.</p> <p>Can depart spontaneously from a prepared text and follow up interesting points raised by members of the audience, often showing remarkable fluency and ease of expression.</p> <p>Can give a clear, prepared presentation, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view and giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.</p> <p>Can take a series of follow up questions with a degree of fluency and spontaneity which poses no strain for either him/herself or the audience.</p>
B1	<p>Can give a prepared straightforward presentation on a familiar topic within his/her field which is clear enough to be followed without difficulty most of the time, and in which the main points are explained with reasonable precision.</p> <p>Can take follow-up questions, but may have to ask for repetition if the speech was rapid.</p>

ACROSS SKILLS

COMPENSATING	
B2	Can use circumlocution and paraphrase to cover gaps in vocabulary and structure.
B1	Can define the features of something concrete for which he/she can't remember the word. Can convey meaning by qualifying a word meaning something similar (e.g. a truck for people = bus). Can use a simple word meaning something similar to the concept he/she wants to convey and invites "correction". Can foreignise a mother tongue word and ask for confirmation.
MONITORING AND REPAIR	
B2	Can correct slips and errors if he/she becomes conscious of them or if they have led to misunderstandings. Can make a note of "favourite mistakes" and consciously monitor speech for them.
B1	Can correct mix-ups with tenses or expressions which lead to misunderstandings provided the interlocutor indicates there is a problem. Can ask for confirmation that a form used is correct. Can start again using a different tactic when communication breaks down.
GENERAL LINGUISTIC RANGE	
B2	Can express him/herself clearly and without much sign of having to restrict what he/she wants to say. Has a sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints and develop arguments without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms to do so.
B1	Has a sufficient range of language to describe unpredictable situations, explain the main points in an idea or problem with reasonable precision and express thoughts on abstract or cultural topics such as music and films. Has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some hesitation and circumlocutions on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel, and current events, but lexical limitations cause repetition and even difficulty with formulation at times.
VOCABULARY RANGE	
B2	Has a good range of vocabulary for matters connected to his field and most general topics. Can vary formulation to avoid frequent repetition, but lexical gaps can still cause hesitation and circumlocution.
B1	Has a sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some circumlocutions on most topics pertinent to his/her everyday life such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel, and current events.

VOCABULARY CONTROL	
B2	Lexical accuracy is generally high, though some confusion and incorrect word choice does occur without hindering communication.
B1	Shows good control of elementary vocabulary but major errors still occur when expressing more complex thoughts or handling unfamiliar topics and situations.

GRAMMATICAL ACCURACY	
B2	Good grammatical control; occasional “slips” or non-systematic errors and minor flaws in sentence structure may still occur, but they are rare and can often be corrected in retrospect. Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical control. Does not make mistakes which lead to misunderstanding.
B1	Communicates with reasonable accuracy in familiar contexts; generally good control though with noticeable mother tongue influence. Errors occur, but it is clear what he/she is trying to express. Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used “routines” and patterns associated with more predictable situations.

PHONOLOGICAL CONTROL	
B2	Has acquired a clear, natural, pronunciation and intonation.
B1	Pronunciation is clearly intelligible even if a foreign accent is sometimes evident and occasional mispronunciations occur.

ORTHOGRAPHIC CONTROL	
B2	Can produce clearly intelligible continuous writing which follows standard layout and paragraphing conventions. Spelling and punctuation are reasonably accurate but may show signs of mother tongue influence.
B1	Can produce continuous writing which is generally intelligible throughout. Spelling, punctuation and layout are accurate enough to be followed most of the time.

SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROPRIATENESS	
B2	Can express him or herself confidently, clearly and politely in a formal or informal register, appropriate to the situation and person(s) concerned. Can with some effort keep up with and contribute to group discussions even when speech is fast and colloquial. Can sustain relationships with native speakers without unintentionally amusing or irritating them or requiring them to behave other than they would with a native speaker. Can express him-/herself appropriately in situations and avoid crass errors of formulation.
B1	Can perform and respond to a wide range of language functions, using their most common exponents in a neutral register. Is aware of the salient politeness conventions and acts appropriately. Is aware of, and looks out for, signs of the most significant differences between the customs, usages, attitudes, values and beliefs prevalent in the community concerned and those of his/her own.

FLEXIBILITY	
B2	<p>Can adjust what he/she says and the means of expressing it to the situation and the recipient and adopt a level of formality appropriate to the circumstances.</p> <p>Can adjust to the changes of direction, style and emphasis normally found in conversation.</p> <p>Can vary formulation of what he/she wants to say.</p>
B1	<p>Can adapt his/her expression to deal with less routine, even difficult, situations.</p> <p>Can exploit a wide range of simple language flexibly to express much of what he/she wants.</p>
COHERENCE AND COHESION	
B2	<p>Can use a variety of linking words efficiently to mark clearly the relationships between ideas.</p> <p>Can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link his/her utterances into clear, coherent discourse, though there may be some "jumpiness" in a long contribution.</p>
B1	<p>Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points.</p>
SPOKEN FLUENCY	
B2	<p>Can communicate spontaneously, often showing remarkable fluency and ease of expression in even longer complex stretches of speech.</p> <p>Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo; although he/she can be hesitant as he/she searches for patterns and expressions, there are few noticeably long pauses.</p> <p>Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without imposing strain on either party.</p>
B1	<p>Can express him/herself with relative ease. Despite some problems with formulation resulting in pauses and "cul-de-sacs", he/she is able to keep going effectively without help.</p> <p>Can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production.</p>
TAKING THE FLOOR (TURNTAKING)	
B2	<p>Can intervene appropriately in discussion, exploiting appropriate language to do so.</p> <p>Can initiate, maintain and end discourse appropriately with effective turntaking.</p> <p>Can initiate discourse, take his turn when appropriate and end conversation when he/she needs to, though he/she may not always do this elegantly.</p> <p>Can use stock phrases (e.g. "That's a difficult question to answer") to gain time and keep the turn whilst formulating what to say.</p>
B1	<p>Can intervene in a discussion on a familiar topic, using a suitable phrase to get the floor.</p> <p>Can initiate, maintain and close simple face-to-face conversation on topics that are familiar or of personal interest.</p>

COOPERATING	
B2	<p>Can give feedback on and follow up statements and inferences and so help the development of the discussion.</p> <p>Can help the discussion along on familiar ground, confirming comprehension, inviting others in, etc.</p>
B1	<p>Can exploit a basic repertoire of language and strategies to help keep a conversation or discussion going.</p> <p>Can summarise the point reached in a discussion and so help focus the talk.</p> <p>Can repeat back part of what someone has said to confirm mutual understanding and help keep the development of ideas on course. Can invite others into the discussion.</p>
ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION	
B2	<p>Can ask follow up questions to check that he/she has understood what a speaker intended to say, and get clarification of ambiguous points.</p>
B1	<p>Can ask someone to clarify or elaborate what they have just said.</p>

2 Test Specifications

2.1 Overview of the Test Format

telc English B1-B2 consists of five subtests:

Subtest	Time
Listening	25 minutes
Reading	40 minutes
Language Elements	20 minutes
Writing	30 minutes
Speaking	approx. 16 minutes

The subtests are divided into parts, as follows:

Written Examination

Subtest Listening	
Part 1	Understanding voice mail messages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4 multiple-choice items ▪ Listening for detail
Part 2	Understanding everyday conversations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 5 true/false items and 5 multiple-choice items ▪ Listening for gist and listening for detail
Part 3	Understanding an interview: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 6 multiple-choice items ▪ Listening for detail
Part 4	Understanding different opinions about a topic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3 matching items ▪ Listening for gist

Subtest Reading	
Part 1	Understanding emails and subject lines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4 matching items ▪ Reading for gist
Part 2	Understanding questions and answers from an Internet forum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 5 matching items ▪ Selective reading
Part 3	Understanding different types of published texts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 6 multiple-choice items ▪ Reading for detail
Part 4	Understanding formal informative texts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3 true/false items ▪ Selective reading
Subtest Language Elements	
Part 1	Selecting appropriate phrases in a conversation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 8 matching items
Part 2	Selecting appropriate phrases in a semi-formal letter or email: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ten multiple-choice items
Subtest Writing	
	Writing semi-formal emails: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 writing task (out of a choice of two)

Oral Examination

The candidates for the Oral Examination are generally examined in pairs, with two examiners assessing each pair of candidates. If there is an odd number of candidates one candidate is tested alone, with one of the examiners taking the place of the other candidate.

Before the oral examination, candidates have 20 minutes preparation time. When they go into the preparation room, they receive the task sheets for Part 2 and Part 3. During the 20 minutes, they can think of what they want to say on these topics and may take notes on an extra sheet of paper. However, they are not allowed to use a dictionary or to communicate with their partner.

Subtest Speaking	
Part 1A	Talking about experiences and opinions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monologue ▪ Task sheet with a picture
Part 1B	Answering follow-up questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dialogue with the examiner ▪ Examiner questions
Part 2A	Presentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monologue ▪ Task sheet with questions and pictures
Part 2B	Answering follow-up questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dialogue with the examiner ▪ Examiner questions
Part 3	Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dialogue with another candidate ▪ Task sheet with sample statements on one topic

2.2 Listening

Listening, Part 1

In the first part of this subtest, the candidates will have a chance to demonstrate their ability to understand important details in voice mail messages.

Possible situations of language use reproduced by the task are:

- Listening to a message on an answering machine
- Understanding recorded messages on the telephone, e. g. messages from an official institution, a service provider or a doctor's office, etc.

Structure	Instructions Example Audio texts Items
Objective	To assess the candidate's ability to understand specific information in voice mail messages
Intended operations	Listening for detail
Type of task	Multiple-choice items with three options
Number of items	Four (items 1–4)
Channel	Text: spoken Instructions and items: written
Type of text	Monologues: voice mail messages, both in personal and work-related contexts
Nature of information	Everyday situations requiring some kind of concrete action or providing the listener with specific information; e. g. contact someone, make a decision, etc.
Speakers	Number of speakers: One per voice mail message
Text length	65–75 words per voice mail message
Test items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The candidate will hear four voice mail messages. ▪ Each message is played once. ▪ For each message, there is one multiple-choice question with three options. The task is to choose the correct statement for each message. Only one option is correct.
Topics	See <i>Inventory T – Topics</i>
Level	Vocabulary and grammar of the audio texts should mostly be at level B1. The language of the items should not exceed level B1.
Weighting	One point per item (0 for incorrect response)

Listening, Part 2

This task aims to gauge the candidate's ability to follow conversations held at normal speed in a private or public context. In each dialogue presented here, students are tested on their ability to grasp the essence of the situation and their ability to understand details of the conversation.

The task reproduces situations of language use in which learners follow everyday conversations, both in personal and in work-related contexts, e. g., in the neighbourhood, at an official institution or at work.

Structure	Instructions Audio texts Items
Objective	To assess the candidate's ability to understand the gist of conversations and the necessary specific details
Intended operations	Listening for gist (items 5, 7, 9, 11 and 13) and listening for detail (items 6, 8, 10, 12 and 14)
Type of task	Five true/false items and five multiple-choice items with three options
Number of items	Ten (items 5–14)
Channel	Text: spoken Instructions and items: written
Type of text	Dialogues: conversations in everyday situations, both in personal and work-related contexts
Nature of information	The conversations can take place between two people meeting in person or talking to each other on the telephone: friends, family, colleagues, neighbours, etc.
Speakers	Number of speakers: two per conversation
Text length	Approximately 140 words per conversation
Test items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The candidate will hear five conversations. ▪ Each conversation is played once. ▪ For each conversation, there are two items: one true/false statement and one multiple-choice item. The task is to decide whether the statement for each conversation is true or false according to what is said and also to choose the correct answer from three options. Only one option per item is correct.
Topics	See <i>Inventory T – Topics</i>
Level	The vocabulary and grammar in the texts and items may range between levels B1 and B2.
Weighting	One point per item (0 for incorrect response)

Listening, Part 3

The aim of this task is to test the candidate's ability to follow an interview of medium length. To facilitate listening, the interview is clearly structured. A radio presenter gives a brief introduction to the topic and the guest speaker. The interviewee may be someone who has an unusual job or someone who reports about a life-changing experience. Over the course of the conversation, the interviewer asks six questions which the interviewee answers at some length. The presenter ends the interview with a concluding sentence.

Structure	Instructions Audio texts Items
Objective	To assess the candidate's ability to understand specific details in an interview
Intended operations	Listening for detail
Type of task	Multiple-choice items with three options
Number of items	Six (items 15–20)
Channel	Text: spoken Instructions and items: written
Type of text	Dialogue: radio programme/podcast of an interview Structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction to the topic spoken by the radio presenter ▪ Six questions and answers ▪ Concluding sentence spoken by the radio presenter
Nature of information	An interview on a topic of general interest (see <i>Inventory T</i>)
Speakers	Number of speakers: two (one interviewer and one interviewee)
Text length	750–800 words in total
Test items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The candidate will hear a radio programme or podcast of an interview. ▪ The interview is played once. ▪ There are six interviewer questions and six items. There is one item for each answer to the interviewer's questions. ▪ The six multiple-choice items have three options each. The task is to choose the correct option for each item. Only one option is correct.
Topics	See <i>Inventory T – Topics</i>
Level	The language in the parts of the text relevant for the items should not exceed level B2. The language in the items should mostly be at level B1.
Weighting	One point per item (0 for incorrect response)

Listening, Part 4

This task is aimed at testing the candidate's ability to follow radio programmes of medium length dealing with everyday topics. They will hear statements spoken by people who have been asked their opinion on a particular topic which a presenter has briefly introduced at the beginning of the programme.

The candidates have to decide which of the short statements provided sums up each of the speakers' opinions accurately.

Structure	Instructions Example Audio texts Items
Objective	To assess the candidate's ability to understand different opinions about a matter of general interest
Intended operations	Listening for gist
Type of task	Matching items
Number of items	Three (items 21–23)
Channel	Text: spoken Instructions and items: written
Type of text	Monologues: radio programme with people stating their opinions on a particular topic Structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction to the topic spoken by the radio presenter ▪ Four people giving their opinions ▪ Concluding sentence spoken by the radio presenter
Nature of information	Short statements reflecting the speakers' feelings, attitudes or opinions about a controversial topic
Speakers	Number of speakers: one per statement
Text length	350–400 words in total
Test items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The candidate will hear a radio programme with four people giving their opinion on a topic. ▪ The radio programme is played once. ▪ Each item is a short statement (one sentence). ▪ There are a total of six statements: one example, three items and two distractors. ▪ The task is to identify the items that correctly summarise the comments made by three speakers.
Topics	See <i>Inventory T – Topics</i>
Level	The language in both the texts and the items should mostly be at level B2.
Weighting	One point per item (0 for incorrect response)

2.3 Reading

Reading, Part 1

This task tests the candidate's ability to understand the main content of a variety of personal or semi-formal emails. It reflects the increasing importance of emails in everyday communication. Reading skills are necessary for a quick perception of the main point of a mail. In this task the candidates will be able to correctly match subject line and email if they have adequately grasped the content of both.

Structure	Instructions Text Items
Objective	To assess the candidate's ability to understand emails and select the best subject line
Intended operations	Reading for gist
Type of task	Matching items
Number of items	Four (items 24–27)
Channel	Written
Type of text	Four personal or semi-formal emails
Nature of information	Emails about everyday life, work, travel, etc.
Text length	60–70 words for each email
Test items	There are four correct subject lines and two distractors. The task is to identify which subject line best matches each email. Only one option is correct.
Topics	See <i>Inventory T – Topics</i>
Level	The language in the items and in the relevant parts of the texts should be at level B1.
Weighting	One point per item (0 for incorrect response)

Reading, Part 2

The aim of this task is to test the candidate's ability to grasp the main content of entries in Internet forums, and subsequently to read those texts which are relevant for required solutions and to understand them in detail.

The language use assessed by this task is relevant for people who wish to use the Internet to research questions of interest to them, eliciting information and advice from Internet forum messages.

Structure	Instructions Texts Items
Objective	To assess the candidate's ability to understand corresponding questions and answers from an Internet forum
Intended operations	Selective reading
Type of task	Matching items
Number of items	Five (items 28–32)
Channel	Written
Type of text	Messages posted on an Internet discussion forum
Nature of information	Questions and answers about issues concerning everyday life: work, travel, hobbies, etc.
Text length	Approximately 500 words in total
Test items	The task is to identify which item matches which text, and which item has no match.
Item length	Approximately 150 words in total
Topics	See <i>Inventory T – Topics</i>
Level	The language in the texts and items may range between levels B1 and B2.
Weighting	One point per item (0 for incorrect response)

Reading, Part 3

This task tests the candidate's ability to deal with different text types. The first text is an informative text about a subject of special interest (science, history, etc.), the second a newspaper article and the third an advertisement for a particular product or service. The candidate is thus required to deal with a variety of topics as well as specific language features that are characteristic for each text type.

Structure	Instructions Texts Items
Objective	To assess the candidate's ability to understand specific details in a variety of formal or semi-formal texts
Intended operations	Reading for detail
Type of task	Multiple-choice items with three options
Number of items	Six (items 33–38)
Channel	Written
Type of text	The candidate has to read three texts: Text 1: Informative text about a special subject Text 2: Newspaper article Text 3: Advertisement
Nature of information	Text 1: Topic of historical, geographical, scientific, etc. interest Text 2: International or local news Text 3: Advertisement for any kind of service or product
Text length	About 200 words per text
Test items	There are two multiple-choice items for each text. The task is to choose the correct answer from three options. Only one option is correct.
Item length	Stem: up to 12 words Options: up to ten words per option
Level	The language in the texts and the items may range between levels B1 and B2.
Weighting	One point per item (0 for incorrect response)

Reading, Part 4

In this task, candidates are asked to demonstrate ability to read a text of medium length with formal or technical features. The text deliberately contains some complex structures and language elements that are above the level tested in the examination, so that the candidates are required to tackle more difficult language. The contexts of language use which the task assesses are how to find and understand relevant information, for example in safety regulations, instructions for the use of appliances, or in written agreements.

Structure	Instructions Text Items
Objective	To assess the candidate's ability to understand relevant passages in formal informative texts
Intended operations	Selective reading
Type of task	True/false items
Number of items	Three (items 39–41)
Channel	Written
Type of text	The candidate has to read a text of medium length that includes some complex language and structures.
Nature of information	Leaflets, instructional manuals, guarantees, regulations, contracts
Text length	Approximately 250 words
Test items	Each item is a short statement (one sentence). The task is to decide whether each statement is true or false according to what is said in the text.
Topics	See <i>Inventory T – Topics</i>
Level	All items should be at level B2. The language in the parts of the text relevant for the items should not exceed level B2.
Weighting	One point per item (0 for incorrect response)

2.4 Language Elements

Language Elements, Part 1

This task bridges the gap between understanding a text and actively engaging with it. The candidates are required to complete a dialogue by selecting appropriate conversational words or expressions (discourse markers). As the items do not primarily focus on grammar and vocabulary, the candidates need to have a grasp of the communicative situation as a whole.

Structure	Instructions Text Items
Objective	To assess the candidate's understanding of conversational expressions and vocabulary in a dialogue
Intended operations	Select the best missing phrase from the language box
Type of task	Matching
Number of items	Eight (items 42–49)
Channel	Written
Type of text	Conversation
Nature of information	A conversation between two people about everyday life, work, travel, etc.
Text length	Approximately 200 words
Test items	There are eight correct options and two distractors (a–j). The task is to choose the correct phrase for each gap. Only one option is correct.
Topics	See <i>Inventory T – Topics</i>
Level	The language in the texts and the items may range between levels B1 and B2.
Weighting	One point per item (0 for incorrect response)

Language Elements, Part 2

In a similar manner to the previous task, the candidates are required to select appropriate short phrases in order to complete a reading passage. The text is a formal or semi-formal letter or email with the typical characteristics of the genre. Again, the items are based on contextual understanding of the communicative situation as a whole, but this task concentrates more on choosing an accurate expression to complete the sentence.

Structure	Instructions Text Items
Objective	To assess the candidate's understanding of text logic, appropriate communicative phrases and vocabulary in semi-formal written correspondence
Intended operations	Completing a letter or email by selecting the appropriate phrases
Type of task	Multiple-choice items with three options
Number of items	Ten (items 50–59)
Channel	Written
Type of text	Short letters or emails in a public or work-related context
Nature of information	Letters/emails of application, enquiry, complaint, reminders, etc.
Text length	Approximately 200 words
Test items	The task is to choose the correct phrase for each gap. Only one option is correct.
Topics	See <i>Inventory T – Topics</i>
Level	The language in the text and the items should mostly be at level B2.
Weighting	One point per item (0 for incorrect response)

2.5 Writing

In the Writing subtest, candidates will be asked to demonstrate their written communication skills.

Candidates can choose one of two options. Each task consists of a brief description of a situation and three guiding points. The candidates are expected to write a semi-formal email, appropriate in content and form, based on the situation and the guiding points. They should address all three guiding points in the order that they think is best.

Candidates are encouraged to demonstrate the best of their writing abilities, and the way in which they do so will be reflected in the score they attain and the CEFR level they are deemed to have achieved. While some candidates may take a concise approach that fully addresses the guiding points, others may choose to elaborate on the required information. Both writing styles are equally acceptable, and for this reason, no word count is specified. However, all candidates must write their text within the 30 minutes timeframe.

Structure	Instructions Situation Three guiding points
Objective	To assess the candidate's ability to communicate in writing
Intended operations	Writing an email that is appropriate in content and form
Type of task	Semi-formal email in everyday situations
Number of writing tasks	One (out of a choice of two)
Channel	Written
Input text	Each task consists of a brief description of the situation and three guiding points.
Nature of information	One of the situations always relates to an aspect of everyday life (e.g. complaint, inquiry). The other situation may be set in a general work-related context, although this is not obligatory.
Output text	Short official email in a public, private or work-related context
Nature of information	Candidates are expected to write an email based on the situation described. In their email, they should cover all three guiding points in detail. They may include additional information related to the topic.
Topics	See <i>Inventory T – Topics</i>
Level	The input texts should be at level B1.
Weighting	B2: 15–20 points B1: 7–14 points Below B1: 0–6 points

2.6 Speaking

Speaking, Part 1

In the first part of the examination, candidates will be asked to talk spontaneously about an everyday topic which they have not prepared beforehand. Each candidate receives a task sheet with a picture related to a particular topic on it.

In Part 1A, the candidates should comment on the situation in the picture; people's roles, their actions, their appearance, etc. They may speculate about the picture and state their personal reaction to it.

In Part 1B, the examiner then asks the candidate some follow-up questions, encouraging them to talk about their opinions and their personal experience with the topic.

Structure	Image (visual stimulus) Examiner questions
Objective	To assess the candidate's ability to talk about his/her personal experiences about a particular topic, and to give opinions.
Intended operations	Talking about experiences and opinions based on the information seen in the picture and answering follow-up questions.
Type of task	Part 1A: monologue (the candidate describes what he/she sees in the picture) Part 1B: dialogue (the candidate reacts to the examiner's questions)
Time	Approximately three minutes per candidate
Channel	Visual and spoken
Part 1A	
Input: task sheet	Each candidate receives a different picture relating to the same topic.
Task	The candidate should comment on what he/she sees in the picture.
Part 1B	
Input: examiner questions	The examiner invites the candidate to talk about his/her personal experiences with the topic and asks one or two follow-up questions.
Task	The candidate should respond to the question(s) in an appropriate manner.
Topics	See <i>Inventory T – Topics</i>
Level	The examiner's task sheet includes three questions at level B1 and three at level B2, from which the examiner chooses the ones appropriate to the candidate's performance.
Weighting	B2: 70–100 points B1: 35–74 points Below B1: 0–34 points

Speaking, Part 2

In the second part of the examination, candidates give a short presentation on one of the two topics on the task sheet. They have been able to use the preparation time before the exam to collect ideas and plan their presentation. The questions and the pictures on the task sheet are intended as an inspiration.

The candidates are expected to talk in turn for about two minutes on their chosen topic. Based on what the candidate has said, the examiner will ask one or two follow-up questions.

Structure	Images and statements on two topics Examiner questions
Objective	To assess the candidate's ability to give a briefly-prepared presentation and answer questions on it.
Intended operations	Giving a presentation and answering follow-up questions.
Type of task	Part 2 A: monologue (presentation) Part 2 B: dialogue (the candidate reacts to the examiner's questions)
Time	Approximately three minutes per candidate
Channel	Visual and spoken
Part 1A	
Input: task sheet	Task sheet with two topics to choose from. Each topic has four pictures and two questions.
Task	The candidate gives a presentation on one of the two topics.
Part 1B	
Input: examiner questions	The examiner asks follow up questions on the candidate's presentation.
Task	The candidate should respond to the question(s) in an appropriate manner.
Topics	See <i>Inventory T – Topics</i>
Level	The examiner should ask questions at both level B1 and level B2.
Weighting	B2: 70–100 points B1: 35–74 points Below B1: 0–34 points

Speaking, Part 3

In the last part of the examination, candidates will be asked to express their opinion and discuss the topic on the task sheet with each other. The preparation time before the exam should be used to think of arguments and personal examples to support ideas.

The candidates may use the sample statements on the task sheet as an inspiration. The examiners normally remain silent during this part of the examination.

Structure	Instructions Three sample statements on one topic.
Objective	To assess the candidate's ability to have a discussion.
Intended operations	Discussing a given topic with your partner, giving reasons and personal examples
Type of task	Dialogue (the candidates talk to each other)
Time	Approximately six minutes for both candidates
Channel	Written and spoken
Input: task sheet	Task sheet with three sample statements on the topic.
Task	The candidates should discuss the topic. They should share opinions, give reasons and personal examples and react to each other's remarks.
Topics	See <i>Inventory T – Topics</i>
Level	Guiding points should be at level B1
Weighting	B2: 70–100 points B1: 35–74 points Below B1: 0–34 points

3 Inventory T - Topics

This list of topic areas is primarily designed for item writers and test constructors. For classroom work and test preparation, this list of topics will merely form a “common-core” basis and will need to be further developed and extended to meet the individual needs and interests of the learners.

All the topics in this inventory may be used for test purposes. When selecting texts and test items for the examinations, the editing team takes care to include only such materials that are likely to reflect the learner's range of experience. Candidates are not required to have specialised knowledge in any of the topic areas.

Topic	Sub-topic
Culture and the arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural traditions and customs ▪ Food and drink ▪ Performing arts and visual arts ▪ Languages
Media and communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mass media ▪ Social networks ▪ People skills
Personal life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lifestyle ▪ Personal development ▪ Friends and family ▪ Leisure activities and recreation ▪ Sport and exercise ▪ Money
Science and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Environmental issues ▪ Natural resources ▪ Plants and animals ▪ Natural hazards
Social issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Immigration ▪ Education ▪ Youth and old age ▪ Economic issues ▪ Social problems ▪ Healthcare

Travel and Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Travelling by road, rail, air or ship▪ Travel advice▪ Backpacking▪ Ecotourism▪ Public transport
Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Jobs▪ Vocational training▪ Unemployment▪ Work-life balance▪ Volunteer work

Common European Framework of Reference: Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing



A1

Listening: I can understand familiar words and very basic phrases when people speak slowly and clearly.

Reading: I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters and in catalogues.

Speaking: I can interact in a simple way. I can use simple sentences to describe where I live and people I know.

Writing: I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings.

A2

Listening: I can understand very basic information. I can understand the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.

Reading: I can find specific information in simple texts (advertisements, menus and timetables) and can understand simple personal letters.

Speaking: I can communicate about simple, routine tasks. I can use a series of sentences to describe my private life and my job.

Writing: I can write short, simple notes and messages. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.

B1

Listening: I can understand the main points of speech on matters of work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand radio or TV programmes if people speak clearly.

Reading: I can understand everyday texts on personal or work matters. I can understand descriptions of events and wishes in personal letters.

Speaking: I can take part in conversations on family, hobby, work, travel and current events.

Writing: I can write simple texts on familiar topics. I can write personal letters describing my experiences and impressions.

B2

Listening: I can understand extended speech and lectures and most TV and current affairs programmes and films.

Reading: I can read articles and reports in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.

Speaking: I can interact with native speakers and take an active part in discussions.

Writing: I can pass on information in reports and essays giving reasons for or against a point of view.

C1

Listening: I can understand extended speech. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.

Reading: I can understand long, complex factual and literary texts and appreciate distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions.

Speaking: I can express myself fluently and spontaneously and with precision. I can present detailed descriptions of complex subjects, rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.

Writing: I can write about complex subjects in letters, essays or reports. I can select the appropriate style for these.

C2

Listening: I can understand specialised lectures or presentations employing a high degree of colloquialism, regional usage or unfamiliar terminology.

Reading: I can understand abstract or specialised texts structured in a complex way, such as handbooks, academic articles or works of literature.

Speaking: I can give a talk in clear, smoothly-flowing speech on a complex subject and can deal with expressing implications and allusions.

Writing: I can summarise information from different sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation of the overall result.

The European Language Certificates

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Goal-oriented learning and easier intercultural communication

- examinations for ten target languages are available at up to six CEFR levels
- the ideal way to continue your professional and personal development
- examinations held in over 3000 examination centres worldwide

ENGLISH

C1	telc English C1
B2-C1	telc English B2-C1 Business* telc English B2-C1 University*
B2	telc English B2 telc English B2 School telc English B2 Business telc English B2 Technical
B1-B2	telc English B1-B2 telc English B1-B2 Business*
B1	telc English B1 telc English B1 School telc English B1 Business telc English B1 Hotel and Restaurant
A2-B1	telc English A2-B1 telc English A2-B1 School telc English A2-B1 Business
A2	telc English A2 telc English A2 School
A1	telc English A1 telc English A1 Junior

ITALIANO

B2	telc Italiano B2
B1	telc Italiano B1
A2	telc Italiano A2
A1	telc Italiano A1

ČESKÝ JAZYK

B1	telc Český jazyk B1
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DEUTSCH

C2	telc Deutsch C2*
C1	telc Deutsch C1 telc Deutsch C1 Hochschule
B2	telc Deutsch B2+ Beruf telc Deutsch B2
B1	telc Deutsch B1+ Beruf Zertifikat Deutsch (telc Deutsch B1) Zertifikat Deutsch für Jugendliche (telc Deutsch B1 Schule)
A2-B1	Deutsch-Test für Zuwanderer
A2	telc Deutsch A2+ Beruf Start Deutsch 2 (telc Deutsch A2) telc Deutsch A2 Schule*
A1	Start Deutsch 1 (telc Deutsch A1) telc Deutsch A1 Junior*

ESPAÑOL

B2	telc Español B2 telc Español B2 Escuela
B1	telc Español B1 telc Español B1 Escuela
A2	telc Español A2 telc Español A2 Escuela
A1	telc Español A1 telc Español A1 Junior*

اللغة العربية

B1	telc اللغة العربية B1
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TÜRKÇE

C1	telc Türkçe C1
B2	telc Türkçe B2 telc Türkçe B2 Okul
B1	telc Türkçe B1 telc Türkçe B1 Okul
A2	telc Türkçe A2 telc Türkçe A2 Okul
A1	telc Türkçe A1

FRANÇAIS

B2	telc Français B2
B1	telc Français B1 telc Français B1 Ecole telc Français B1 pour la Profession
A2	telc Français A2 telc Français A2 Ecole
A1	telc Français A1 telc Français A1 Junior*

РУССКИЙ ЯЗЫК

B2	telc Русский язык B2
B1	telc Русский язык B1
A2	telc Русский язык A2
A1	telc Русский язык A1

PORTUGUÊS

B1	telc Português B1
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* coming in the second half of 2012

Free mock examinations can be downloaded at www.telc.net.

HANDBOOK

ENGLISH B1·B2

telc English B1·B2 is a standardised dual-level examination intended for adult learners. It measures general language competence across two levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)* using a task-based, communicative approach.

The *telc English B1·B2 Handbook* is designed for teachers who wish to prepare their learners for telc English examinations as well as for examiners, heads of language departments in schools and other ELT professionals.

The Handbook explains the structure and specifications of the examination and provides detailed information on how the subtests Listening, Reading, Language Elements, Writing and Speaking are assessed alongside the relevant CEFR scales at levels B1 and B2.

For additional information regarding the *telc English B1·B2* examination (including sample tasks), please refer to the *telc English B1·B2 Mock Examination*.