LANGUAGECERT

What makes LANGUAGECERT Academic relevant for higher education?

No quality test is static.
As an exam board and as test developers, we need to respond dynamically to changing markets and stakeholder expectations. We've listened to feedback and developed, with our assessment experts, an English test appropriate for the academic sector that focuses on language encountered and produced in a college or university domain.

A test fit for purpose

We've taken LANGUAGECERT ESOL C1 as a starting point, added more academic content and developed it into a multi-level test with scores across (B1-C2) levels, with results reported on the 0-100 LANGUAGECERT Global Scale for the four skills. LANGUAGECERT Academic is built on a bed of underpinning **research and validation**, and is relevant for higher education because:

1. The **contexts** focus on language used in an academic environment, with generic academic vocabulary and expressions relevant to most subjects. The test contains scenarios which include discussions with tutors, fellow students or university officials, lectures, seminars as well as authentic academic source materials (articles, journals, reports).

2. The **tasks** sample features of language and skills from those required to succeed in an academic setting, e.g., writing essays, giving presentations, note-taking, formulating arguments.

3. The **levels** span the range of CEFR levels that assist receiving institutions to make the decision whether a potential student will be able to cope with the rigors of academic language requirements at university, i.e., CEFR B1–C2.

Building transferable skills for the real world

Our definition of what test takers need to do in the target language domains (real world) is essential; it has to be based on real-world knowledge and experience of the test takers and the environment, and validated through ongoing research to make sure we've got it right and that our tests always remain valid.

Positive 'washback by design' is embedded in our development and review processes and is a theme in our continuing programme of research. If our underlying definition is relevant and accurate, learners will be preparing skills which will support their development in higher education.

Underpinned by robust research and validation

In order to support the production of high-quality exam materials, LANGUAGECERT makes use of both internal and external research and validation resources. Recent publications of relevance to the validation, reliability, quality and impact of LanguageCert examinations are provided **here.**

Sample tasks

Below are some examples of the types of tasks presented in the test. To explore all task types and to learn more about the test structure and how it is assessed, you can view the **LANGUAGECERT Academic Handbook.**

Listening

Sample Listening Task
- Candidate listens to a short dialogue and chooses the best reply to complete the conversation.

Real-world skills
- Understanding and recognising speaker relationships and contexts, e.g. when conversing with lecturers, fellow students, university staff
- Using appropriate language and register for a range of academic contexts

Benefits
- More successful communication
- Better joint understanding
- Getting things done smoothly and effectively

Reading

Sample Reading Task
- Candidates read an academic text and choose the correct sentences to complete gaps in the text

Real-world skills
- Understanding how meaning is built up in academic texts and how they are structured according to specific conventions
- Fluent and active reading (and writing)

Benefits
- Improved ability to access meaning in academic texts
- Strategies to take an analytical approach to reading by breaking down text into logical chunks and identifying the linguistic markers which will unlock meaning.
- Greater confidence and resilience to tackle a range of academic reading

Writing

Sample Writing Task
- Write a discursive piece on an academic subject (around 250 words)

Real-world skills
- Presenting and justifying arguments, opinions and solutions
- Comparing and contrasting
- Describing and analysing pros/cons, cause and effect

Benefits
- Producing an extended piece of writing in which a position is argued/developed coherently

Speaking

Sample Speaking Task
- Prepare and deliver a presentation in response to a visual stimulus and answer questions.

Real-world skills
- Presenting clearly and concisely on an academic theme in tutorials, seminars or academic exams
- Responding to questions from tutors and students

Benefits
- Improved ability to articulate a formal response to an academic-style stimulus
- Improved ability to present and answer questions in real time