

IESOL (Speaking & Listening) Qualification Handbook

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About LanguageCert

LanguageCert is an Ofqual recognised Awarding Organisation responsible for the development and award of language qualifications. LanguageCert's mission is to offer high quality language qualifications that are truly fit-for purpose for the markets/candidates they serve.

LanguageCert ESOL International Qualifications (Entry Levels 1, 2 & 3, and Levels 1, 2 & 3 corresponding to CEFR levels A1 to C2) are regulated by Ofqual.

1.1 ESOL Qualifications

ESOL qualifications are designed for candidates 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 worldwide. They are suitable for candidates who are seeking professional employment in the UK or elsewhere, or for candidates who need to demonstrate that they have met the required level of English by passing a test with a Home Office approved Secure English Language testing (SELT) provider. ESOL International qualifications are designed to reference the descriptions of language proficiency in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The levels in the CEFR have been mapped to the levels in the Regulated 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).

LanguageCert ESOL International qualifications are available from A1 to C2 and candidates are able to choose the most appropriate qualification to meet their specific needs. For further information, please visit the LanguageCert website (www.languagecert.org).

1.2 The ESOL International (Speaking & Listening) qualification handbook

This LanguageCert International ESOL (Speaking & Listening) qualification handbook provides a comprehensive introduction to the LanguageCert suite of ESOL International (Speaking & Listening) qualifications and their associated examinations.

The aim of this handbook is to provide information and advice for users of LanguageCert's qualifications, inclusive of all existing and potential centres offering the LanguageCert ESOL International (Speaking & Listening) qualifications. This handbook also serves as a reference point for teachers who prepare their candidates for the LanguageCert ESOL International examinations.

Please note that separate qualification handbooks have been produced for the International ESOL (Speaking) and International ESOL (Listening, Reading and Writing) Qualifications. These are also available on the LanguageCert website.

If required, for further advice and/or guidance that may be required, LanguageCert can be contacted using the LanguageCert "Contact us Guide".

1.3 ESOL Qualifications (Speaking & Listening)

This range of qualifications offers a communicative approach to the testing of Speaking at three levels. The names used for each level of the LanguageCert International ESOL qualifications and each level's correspondence to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and UK national levels are shown in the table below:

LanguageCert ESOL International Qualification Levels	Corresponding CEFR Levels	Equivalent UK (England and Wales) national levels
Preliminary	A1 Breakthrough	Entry 1
Access	A2 Waystage	Entry 2
Achiever	B1 Threshold	Entry 3

1.4 Total Qualification Time (TQT) and Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

The term 'Guided Learning Hours' is defined as the hours of guided learning under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.

Total Qualification Time is the number of notional hours which represent an estimate of the total amount of time that could reasonably be expected to be required in order for a learner to achieve and demonstrate the achievement of the level of attainment necessary for the award of a qualification.

With regard to Guided Learning Hours, LanguageCert is consistent with CEFR references which assign approximate values to levels of International qualifications. As highlighted by ALTE, as a learner advances up the levels, the number of hours to attain each level increases, this being evidence of the continual nature of language learning.

Please note that Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is not applicable to the suite of ESOL International qualifications.

CEFR Level and Corresponding LanguageCert and UK national Levels (England and Wales)	Qualification Title	Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	Total Qualification Time (TQT)
Preliminary Level A1 – Entry 1	LanguageCert Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 1) (Speaking & Listening) (Preliminary A1)	95 hours	200 hours
Access Level A2 – Entry 2	LanguageCert Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 2) (Speaking & Listening) (Access A2)	95 hours	200 hours
Achiever Level B1 – Entry 3	LanguageCert Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 3) (Speaking & Listening) (Achiever B1)	180 hours	300 hours

Please note that the above figures are estimates of numbers of hours a learner is reasonably likely to undertake in respect of each respective level of the qualification, not cumulative estimates across levels.

LanguageCert liaises with its centres and users to ensure that appropriate and consistent numbers of study hours are assigned to its qualifications.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is not applicable to the suite of International ESOL qualifications.

2.1 Introduction to ESOL International (Speaking & Listening)

The aim of the LanguageCert ESOL International (Speaking & Listening) qualifications is to demonstrate a candidate's ability to communicate using the English language across the CEFR levels from A1 (Entry 1) to B1 (Entry 3).

The LanguageCert ESOL International (Speaking & Listening) qualifications offer a comprehensive test of spoken English. The tasks in the examinations are designed to test the use of English in real-life situations. The ESOL International series of graded examinations provides 'steps up the ladder' of proficiency and can motivate candidates who are attending courses over a long period to continue their studies. They are also suitable for candidates attending short courses in English. The LanguageCert International ESOL (Speaking) qualifications are also suitable for those who need to demonstrate that they have met the required level of English by passing a test with a UK Home Office approved Secure English Language Testing (SELT) provider.

These examinations have been mapped to the levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Who are the LanguageCert ESOL International qualifications intended for?

The overall objective of the LanguageCert ESOL International qualifications is to provide candidates with a qualification that they can use where the ability to speak and understand verbal English is required. The qualifications are suitable for:

- non-native speakers of English
- young people or adults attending an English language course
- students learning English as part of their school or college curriculum
- people needing English for their everyday or working life
- learners who require externally recognised certification of their command of the English language
- visa applicants who need to demonstrate that they have met the required level of English by passing a test with a UK Home Office approved Secure English Language Testing (SELT) provider.

Entry Requirements:

- There are no other qualifications that a candidate must achieve, prior to taking a LanguageCert ESOL International qualification.
- There are no prior learning requirements that candidates must achieve/have prior to taking the LanguageCert ESOL International qualifications, however it is important that centres offer candidates the most appropriate LanguageCert ESOL qualification, depending on each candidate's ability and needs.

Why take LanguageCert ESOL International qualifications?

Frequent Examination Dates

Frequent exam scheduling makes a flexible registration possible that suits the needs of the candidates.

Integrity of total external assessment

All exams are assessed by a group of Marking Examiners at LanguageCert, regularly standardised through training to ensure consistency and objectivity of assessment.

Ofqual Recognition

LanguageCert is an Awarding Organisation recognised and regulated by Ofqual. Ofqual is a non-ministerial government department that regulates qualifications, exams and tests in England. Ofqual is independent of government and reports directly to Parliament.

UK Home Office recognition

LanguageCert is authorized by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), to deliver Home Office approved, Secure English Language Tests (SELTs) in the UK and globally. UKVI is the part of the Home Office which runs the UK's visa service. LanguageCert's SELTs are a secure, reliable, trusted and attractive choice for candidates applying for UK visas where English language ability must be demonstrated.

International recognition

LanguageCert International English Qualifications (IEQs) are quality English language exams recognised by employers, educational institutions and professional bodies worldwide for both academic progression and employment.

Relevance

The tasks are sufficiently universal to suit all language learning styles and preparation methods. Exam content authentically replicates real-life English in use. All efforts are made to minimise bias in the examination materials. This includes robust quality assurance in the qualifications/exams development process and extensive trialing of qualification/assessment materials before live use.

2.2 Levels and duration of the exam

The levels chart below shows the three levels of the ESOL International (Speaking & Listening) qualifications and the duration of each associated examination. All examinations test Speaking & Listening skills.

Examination Levels	Qualification Titles	Duration of Speaking & Listening Test
A1 – Preliminary – (Entry 1)	LanguageCert Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 1) (Speaking & Listening) (Preliminary A1)	8 - 9 minutes
A2 – Access – (Entry 2)	LanguageCert Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 2) (Speaking & Listening) (Access A2)	9 - 11 minutes
B1 – Achiever – (Entry 3)	LanguageCert Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 3) (Speaking & Listening) (Achiever B1)	11 - 13 minutes

2.3 Qualification Titles

The table below outlines the level names, full titles and qualification numbers for all levels of the ESOL International (Speaking & Listening) qualifications.

LanguageCert and CEFR level	Qualification Title	Ofqual Qualification Numbers
Preliminary (A1)	LanguageCert Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 1) (Speaking & Listening) (Preliminary A1)	603/3634/1
Access (A2)	LanguageCert Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 2) (Speaking & Listening) (Access A2)	603/3635/3
Achiever (B1)	LanguageCert Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 3) (Speaking & Listening) (Achiever B1)	603/3636/5

The full qualification titles identify the level of each qualification inclusive of the LanguageCert, CEFR, and England and Wales levels.

The name of each examination and appropriate CEFR Level appear on each certificate.

2.3 CEFR and alignment of ESOL International (Speaking & Listening) to the CEFR

The three levels of the LanguageCert International ESOL (Speaking & Listening) qualifications are linked to those of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages¹ developed by the Council of Europe. The comparative levels chart below shows how the levels relate to each other.

LanguageCert Levels	Common European Framework	Equivalent UK national levels (England and Wales)
A1 Preliminary	A1 Breakthrough	Entry Level 1
A2 Access	A2 Waystage	Entry Level 2
B1 Achiever	B1 Threshold	Entry Level 3

¹See 'Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment' CUP 2001 ISBN 0521 005310

2.5 Descriptions of spoken competence at each level

LanguageCert and CEFR qualification level	Descriptor
Preliminary (A1)	<p>Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases satisfying practical needs in connection with education, training and social roles.</p> <p>Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as possessions, address and people known.</p> <p>Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.</p>
Access (A2)	<p>Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance such as basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment, education, training and social roles.</p> <p>Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a direct exchange of information, feelings and opinions on familiar and routine matters.</p> <p>Can engage in conversation to establish shared understanding about familiar topics.</p>
Achiever (B1)	<p>Can understand the main points of clear standard communication on matters regularly encountered in social roles, work, school, leisure, education and training.</p> <p>Can convey information, feelings and opinions on familiar topics, using appropriate formality.</p> <p>Can engage in discussion in a familiar situation making relevant points and responding to reach a shared understanding.</p> <p>Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken.</p> <p>Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give explanations for opinions and plans.</p>

The above descriptors have been adapted from the global description of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

2.6 Format and features of ESOL International (Speaking & Listening)

Skill & Focus	Task
<p>Speaking & Listening Part 1: to respond to questions on familiar matters and communicate personal information</p> <p>Preliminary and Access: to give personal information</p> <p>Achiever: to express opinions and ideas in addition to the above.</p>	<p>Give and spell name</p> <p>Give country/place of origin</p> <p>Answer three to four questions</p>
<p>Speaking & Listening Part 2: to initiate and respond appropriately in social situations</p> <p>All levels: to communicate in real-life situations using a range of functional language to elicit or respond as appropriate. The sophistication and length of the expected candidate output increases through A1 to B1.</p>	<p>Two situations are presented by the interlocutor at each level and candidates are required to respond to and initiate interactions.</p>
<p>Speaking & Listening Part 3: to exchange information and opinions</p> <p>Preliminary and Access: to exchange information to complete a simple task</p> <p>Achiever: to co-operate to reach agreement/decision. The sophistication and length of the expected candidate output increases through A1 to B1.</p>	<p>Exchange information to identify similarities and differences in pictures of familiar situations at Preliminary and Access levels</p> <p>Hold a short discussion to make a plan, arrange or decide on something using visual prompts at Achiever.</p>
<p>Speaking & Listening Part 4 (a & b): to understand a short monologue delivered by the Marking Interlocutor and to deliver a short, uninterrupted talk on a relevant topic</p> <p>Preliminary and Access: to demonstrate the ability to use sentences and produce a piece of connected spoken English</p> <p>Achiever: to narrate, describe or communicate ideas and express opinion(s). The sophistication and length of the expected candidate output increases through A1 to B1.</p>	<p>Listen to the monologue and answer the questions.</p> <p>After 30 seconds of preparation time, talk about a topic provided by the interlocutor</p> <p>Preliminary – half a minute</p> <p>Access – 1 minute</p> <p>Achiever – 1 and a half minutes</p> <p>Answer follow-up questions</p>

2.7 The four parts of ESOL International (Speaking & Listening)

Part 1 – communicating personal information

The aim of this part is to settle the candidate and to elicit personal and everyday information. The Marking Interlocutor first asks for the spelling of the candidate's family name and then asks for the candidate's country of origin. It is not necessary for any information to be written down. The interlocutor then selects further questions from the list provided.

With the exception of Preliminary, questions are given under topic headings. The questions allow the candidate to respond by giving personal information, ideas and opinions on a range of topics and should produce a natural interaction in the time allowed. Questions range from very simple, eg *How old are you?* (**Preliminary**) to more complex prompts, depending on the level.

Part 2 – communicating appropriately in social situations

The aim of this part is to test the candidate's use and understanding of functional language in a range of real-life situations. Interlocutor and candidate enact two situations. The Interlocutor may need to assume a different persona, but the candidate is never required to do so.

The dialogue will usually involve four exchanges (two short turns each). The interlocutor reads aloud the exact words given for the chosen situation which signals the start of the dialogue.

The interlocutor first chooses one from four situations provided in the interlocutor script, to which the candidate responds.

At Preliminary level, a typical situation might be:	Interlocutor: We are in a café. I'm a waiter. You're a customer. I start. <i>'Good morning. What would you like to drink?'</i>
At Achiever level, a typical situation might be:	Interlocutor: I'm your friend. You look tired. I start. <i>'Why don't you take a holiday?'</i>

The Marking Interlocutor then chooses one from four situations provided in the interlocutor script which require the candidate to initiate the interaction.

At Preliminary level, a typical situation might be:	Interlocutor: You want to find a post office. Ask me. You start.
At Achiever level, a typical situation might be:	Interlocutor: I'm waiting for you outside the cinema. You're late. You start.

Part 3 – exchanging information and opinions

The aim of this part is to test the candidate’s ability to use and understand English in order to give and receive information and perform a communicative task. The task topics do not require the candidate to have specialist knowledge. The interlocutor and candidate exchange information to perform a task.

It is the language used in the interaction that is most important, not the ability to fully complete the task in the given time. However, the interaction should move towards achievement of the task set.

At **Preliminary** and **Access** levels the candidate needs to give and ask for information to find the differences between two pictures.

At **Achiever** an attempt at agreement after a discussion based on visual prompts is expected.

Part 4 – understanding a monologue and presenting a topic

The aim of this part is to test a candidate’s ability to understand a short monologue and then speak independently about a relevant topic with minimal participation by the Marking Interlocutor. The Marking Interlocutor reads from a script and then asks the candidate three questions, which need to be answered orally. Then, the Marking interlocutor announces the topic the candidate needs to talk about. The candidates are given 30 seconds of preparation time to make notes if they wish.

At Preliminary level, a typical topic might be:	What you do on Sundays.
At Achiever level, a typical topic might be:	An exciting experience.

The candidate may be asked to answer follow-up questions to their presentation or may be interrupted with questions from the Marking Interlocutor.

2.8 Key responsibilities of the Marking Interlocutor

The Marking Interlocutor is responsible for conducting LanguageCert ESOL International (Speaking & Listening) examinations. S/he elicits the spoken performance of the candidate by asking questions or setting up speaking tasks using the scripted Interlocutor Framework.

The Marking Interlocutor must be:

- fluent and articulate in spoken English
- highly skilled at eliciting speech
- suitably qualified and experienced in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language
- fully familiar with the levels of the Common European Framework (CEFR)
- able to adjust their language to reflect the lower 3 levels of the CEFR (A1, A2, B1)

Marking Interlocutors may be native or non-native speakers of English. The Marking Interlocutor must have an excellent command of English, and be able to use the language to high degrees of skill in order to elicit language at an appropriate level from the candidate. A wide range of spoken and listening skills are tested: long turns, short turns, interactional and transactional language.

To ensure all candidates have an equal chance of giving their best performance, the examinations must be conducted fairly and consistently and in accordance with the rules and regulations laid down by LanguageCert.

The Marking Interlocutor must:

- be fully familiar with the contents of:
 - The Guide for Marking Interlocutors
 - The Qualification Handbook (Speaking & Listening)
- be able to attend training as required
- manage the interaction in the test and facilitate the candidate's performance
- assess the candidate's performance based on a set of criteria and descriptors of performance for each level
- be completely familiar with the scripted Interlocutor framework for each level of the ESOL International (Speaking & Listening) exams and deliver it as accurately as possible
- adjust own use of English and speed of delivery as is appropriate for the level of the exam
- keep to the prescribed timings for all parts of the exam
- ensure that all candidates are treated fairly and given an equal opportunity to speak

- ensure the security of examination material at all times and that no examination materials are left unattended
- ensure that all the administration connected with the live exam recordings is accurately carried out
- ensure all necessary procedures are in place to prevent malpractice during the examination

During each examination, an Invigilator is available for all aspects of the examination outside the Exam Room. The **Invigilator** is responsible for:

- checking the identity of each candidate prior to the exam
- ensuring that candidates wait in a designated area prior to their exam taking place
- showing candidates into the Exam Room at the appropriate time
- providing the candidate with paper and pencil/pen
- ensuring that candidates who have completed their exam do not mix with those who are still waiting to go into the Exam Room
- ensuring that candidates do not bring unauthorised material into the exam room
- ensuring that candidates do not take with them any exam material after they complete the exam
- ensuring that people moving around in the vicinity of the Exam Room remain quiet.

3.1 Syllabus

Introduction

The syllabus shows the standards which a learner must achieve to gain a pass in each of the three levels of the examination. The standards must be read in conjunction with the sections showing the grammar tested at each level and the functions and topics used and tested at each level. These follow each set of standards.

The standards set out in the following pages are cumulative. That is, an A2 candidate, for example, will be able to carry out the standards set out for A1 and A2.

Preliminary level – A1

Speaking

The candidate will be able to:

- interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech
- initiate and respond to simple statements about personal details, in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics
- communicate in a very limited range of social situations using a basic range of functional language
- exchange information to perform a task
- describe and explain familiar topics and simple routines
- give single-step instructions and directions in familiar contexts
- ask and answer simple questions
- produce simple phrases to express likes, dislikes and preferences in relation to familiar topics
- contribute points to a discussion, provided the other speakers are co-operative.

Pronunciation

The candidate will be able to:

- pronounce with sufficient clarity a limited repertoire of words and phrases so they can be understood by a sympathetic listener.

Accuracy

The candidate will be able to:

- display a limited control of very basic grammatical structures.

Range

The candidate will be able to:

- produce simple phrases and sentences to give basic information about and descriptions of familiar people and places, feelings and opinions.

Register

The candidate will be able to:

- cope appropriately, with support from the other person, in a limited range of familiar social situations.

Fluency

The candidate will be able to:

- manage the conventions of turn taking in very simple interactions
- use a very limited range of connectors to link utterances.

Listening

The candidate will be able to:

- follow carefully and slowly articulated speech which contains long pauses and repetition to allow the listener to process the information
- follow short conversations in everyday situations on topics concerning self, family and immediate surroundings, and understand gist, context and the relationship between speakers
- understand very simple questions, statements, accounts, narratives and single-step instructions spoken carefully and slowly
- follow short, simple directions and explanations
- identify the function of short utterances (see Grammar and Functions sections which follow)
- extract key information from conversations to complete a simple task.

Phonological features

The candidate will be able to:

- listen for phonological detail to distinguish between similar words.

Range

The candidate will be able to:

- understand key grammatical forms used in very common everyday familiar contexts
- recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning self, family and immediate concrete surroundings.

Understanding gist

The candidate will be able to:

- understand the main ideas of short explanations and conversations
- identify speakers, context and topic of short conversations.

Understanding detail

The candidate will be able to:

- extract key words, numbers and spellings from short statements and explanations.

Topics - Preliminary Level – A1

The candidate will be able to engage in spoken interaction on the following topics.

PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION

- name
- address
- date and place of birth
- age
- sex
- marital status
- nationality
- origin
- occupation
- family
- likes and dislikes
- physical appearance
- title
- first language

HOUSE AND HOME, ENVIRONMENT

- accommodation, rooms
- furniture, furnishing
- services
- amenities
- region
- flora and fauna

DAILY LIFE

- at home
- at work

FREE TIME, ENTERTAINMENT

- leisure
- hobbies and interests
- TV, radio, computer etc
- cinema, theatre
- intellectual pursuits
- sports
- press
- internet
- music
- holidays

TRAVEL

- public transport
- private transport
- traffic
- holiday accommodation
- luggage
- travel documents
- signs and notices

LANGUAGE

- foreign language ability
- spelling and the alphabet

RELATIONS WITH OTHER PEOPLE

- relationships
- correspondence
- behaviour
- friends

HEALTH AND BODYCARE

- parts of the body
- personal comfort
- hygiene
- ailments, accidents
- medical services

SHOPPING

- shopping facilities
- foodstuffs
- clothes, fashion
- household articles
- prices

FOOD AND DRINK

- types of food and drink
- eating and drinking out

SERVICES

- post
- telephone
- banking
- police
- hospital, surgery

- garage
- petrol station
- emergency

PLACES

- asking the way and giving directions
- location

WEATHER

- giving information about the climate and weather
- climate and weather

MEASURES AND SHAPES

- digits and cardinal numbers up to 31
- telephone numbers
- height, length, weight, capacity, temperature
- dates, times, days
- shape

EDUCATION

- schooling
- subjects

Functions - Preliminary Level – A1

(see topics list for contexts)

Personal environment

- asking for and giving personal information
- describing where one lives (accommodation, area, etc)
- asking and answering questions for confirmation, information, identification
- describing familiar people, places and things
- correcting information
- explaining daily routines.

Expressing thoughts and feelings

- expressing agreement or disagreement
- stating knowledge or ignorance of something or someone
- stating and asking about ability or inability to do something
- seeking, granting or denying permission
- expressing wishes
- expressing a preference
- expressing likes and dislikes
- offering and accepting an apology.

Making things happen

- responding to a request
- requesting something or requesting someone to do something
- inviting someone to do something
- accepting or declining an offer or invitation
- giving single-step instructions
- counting and using numbers.

Social contact

- getting someone's attention
- greeting people and responding to greetings
- expressing thanks
- addressing somebody
- introducing oneself, family and close friends
- opening, closing a conversation
- indicating lack of understanding
- asking someone to clarify something
- asking for and giving the spelling and meaning of words
- asking for and telling people the time, day, date
- taking leave.

Access level – A2

Speaking

The candidate will be able to:

- speak with reasonable ease in structured situations and short conversations on familiar topics, although from time to time will be asked to repeat or clarify
- communicate personal information to give simple descriptions of family, other people, living or working conditions, habits and daily routines, education background and/or job
- communicate in a limited number of social situations using a range of functional language
- exchange information to perform a task
- give simple directions, instructions and explanations
- ask and answer questions
- give a short description or tell a simple story using simple and compound sentences
- express simple feelings and opinions and establish a shared understanding.

Pronunciation

The candidate will be able to:

- pronounce the sounds of English sufficiently clearly to be generally understood.

Accuracy

The candidate will be able to:

- display some control of basic grammatical structures.

Range

The candidate will be able to:

- display an adequate range of vocabulary to communicate on familiar topics and perform simple tasks.

Register

The candidate will be able to:

- adjust language to suit context in straightforward situations.

Fluency

The candidate will be able to:

- manage the conventions of turn taking in short social exchanges, using simple techniques to start, maintain, and end a conversation
- use a limited number of common discourse markers.

Listening

The candidate will be able to:

- understand speech which is clearly and slowly articulated
- follow short conversations both formal and informal connected with education, work and social life understanding gist, context, feelings, opinions and relationships
- understand simple questions, statements, narratives, directions, explanations and instructions
- identify the function of short utterances (see Grammar and Functions sections)
- extract and reproduce key information from simple spoken messages and announcements.

Phonological features

The candidate will be able to:

- recognise stress and intonation in simple and compound sentences

Range

The candidate will be able to:

- understand key grammatical forms used in common everyday contexts and situations
- understand high frequency vocabulary and basic phrases relating to areas of immediate personal relevance in straightforward familiar formal and informal exchanges.

Understanding gist

The candidate will be able to:

- understand the main ideas in short, clear, simple messages, presentations and announcements, explanations, narratives and instructions
- identify topic, purpose, context, speakers, relationships and opinions from conversations.

Understanding detail

The candidate will be able to:

- extract key words, phrases, numbers and spellings from announcements and messages.

Topics – Access Level – A2

PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION

- name
- address
- date and place of birth
- age
- sex
- marital status
- nationality
- origin
- occupation
- family
- likes and dislikes
- physical appearance
- title
- first language

HOUSE AND HOME, ENVIRONMENT

- accommodation, rooms
- furniture, furnishing
- services
- amenities
- region
- flora and fauna

DAILY LIFE

- at home
- at work

FREE TIME, ENTERTAINMENT

- leisure
- hobbies and interests
- TV, radio, computer etc
- cinema, theatre
- intellectual pursuits
- sports
- press
- internet
- music
- holidays

TRAVEL

- public transport
- private transport
- traffic
- holiday accommodation
- luggage
- travel documents
- signs and notices

RELATIONS WITH OTHER PEOPLE

- relationship
- correspondence
- behaviour
- invitations
- friends

HEALTH AND BODYCARE

- parts of the body

- personal comfort
- hygiene
- ailments, accidents
- medical services

SHOPPING

- shopping facilities
- foodstuffs
- clothes, fashion
- household articles
- prices

FOOD AND DRINK

- types of food and drink
- eating and drinking out

SERVICES

- post
- telephone
- banking
- police
- hospital, surgery
- garage
- petrol station
- emergency

PLACES

- asking the way and giving directions
- location

LANGUAGE

- foreign language ability
- spelling and the alphabet

WEATHER

- providing limited information about the climate and weather

MEASURES AND SHAPES

- digits and cardinal numbers up to 100 and multiples of 100
- telephone numbers, process
- height, length, weight, capacity, temperature
- dates, times, days
- shape

EDUCATION

- schooling
- subjects

Functions - Access Level – A2

(See topics list for contexts)

Personal environment

- asking for and giving personal information
- describing where one lives (accommodation, area, etc)
- asking and answering questions for confirmation, information, identification
- describing people, places and things
- correcting information
- explaining daily routines
- describing past events
- comparing things, people

Expressing thoughts and feelings

- expressing agreement or disagreement
- denying something
- expressing views and feelings with reasons
- stating and asking about knowledge or ignorance of something or someone
- stating and asking about ability or inability to do something
- stating and asking about certainty or uncertainty of something
- seeking, granting or denying permission
- expressing and asking about wishes and hopes
- expressing and asking about wants, desires, needs
- stating and asking about intention
- stating a preference
- expressing and asking about likes and dislikes, with reasons
- expressing and asking about (dis)pleasure, (un)happiness
- expressing gratitude

- offering and accepting an apology
- expressing approval or appreciation
- expressing regret

Making things happen

- responding to a request
- requesting something or requesting someone to do something
- inviting someone to do something
- accepting or declining an offer or invitation
- giving instructions
- giving advice
- warning others to be careful or to stop doing something
- offering and requesting assistance
- suggesting a course of action

Social contact

- getting someone's attention
- greeting people and responding to greetings
- expressing thanks
- addressing somebody
- introducing oneself, family and close friends
- opening, closing a conversation
- congratulating someone
- indicating lack of understanding
- asking someone to clarify or explain something
- asking someone to repeat all or part of something
- asking someone to speak more slowly
- asking for help in finding words or phrases
- asking for and giving the spelling and meaning of words

- counting and using numbers
- asking for and telling people the time, day, date
- interrupting politely
- summing up
- taking leave
- observing telephone conventions

Achiever level – B1

Speaking

The candidate will be able to:

- interact competently if not always accurately in everyday situations
- communicate personal information, opinions and ideas and respond to those of others
- communicate in a variety of social situations using an appropriate range of functional language
- exchange information, feelings and opinions to perform a task
- narrate, describe, explain and express opinions in extended speech related to familiar contexts
- contribute points to a simple discussion.

Pronunciation

The candidate will be able to:

- pronounce the sounds of English sufficiently well to be generally understood and show a fair control of stress and intonation patterns.

Accuracy

The candidate will be able to:

- display a good control of basic grammatical structures without impeding errors when dealing with familiar topics.

Range

The candidate will be able to:

- display an adequate range of vocabulary and expression to deal with familiar situations and topics
- narrate using past tenses.

Register

The candidate will be able to:

- adopt a degree of formality appropriate to familiar circumstances
- use appropriate phrases in familiar situations such as greeting and leave-taking.

Fluency

The candidate will be able to:

- initiate and follow the norms of turn-taking, prompt and manage the discourse with a degree of independence
- connect descriptions, narratives and descriptions in simple ways
- speak without undue hesitation unless searching for information, vocabulary or when reformulating

Listening

The candidate will be able to:

- understand clearly articulated standard speech delivered relatively slowly
- follow short conversations both formal and informal in a range of familiar situations understanding gist, context, feelings, opinions and relationships
- understand straightforward narratives, sequences, instructions, directions and explanations
- identify the function of short utterances (see Grammar and Functions sections)
- follow the main points, speakers, purposes and attitudes in an extended discussion
- extract and reproduce key information from announcements and media broadcasts on a range of familiar topics.

Phonological features

The candidate will be able to:

- recognise stress and intonation in order to follow discourse
- recognise feelings, moods, attitudes, important points and opinions expressed through stress and intonation.

Range

The candidate will be able to:

- understand key grammatical forms used in familiar and less familiar contexts and situations
- understand high frequency vocabulary and expressions relating to familiar and less familiar topics.

Understanding gist & detail

The candidate will be able to:

- understand the main ideas in straightforward announcements, conversations and discussions on familiar and less familiar topics.
- extract key information from announcements, conversations and discussions on familiar and less familiar topics.

Topics - Achiever Level – B1

PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION

- name
- address
- date and place of birth
- age
- sex
- marital status
- nationality
- origin
- occupation
- family
- likes and dislikes
- physical appearance
- title
- first language
- character, disposition

HOUSE AND HOME, ENVIRONMENT

- accommodation, rooms
- furniture, bedclothes
- services
- amenities
- region
- flora and fauna
- types of accommodation
- cost

DAILY LIFE

- at home
- at work
- income
- prospects

FREE TIME, ENTERTAINMENT

- leisure
- hobbies and interests
- TV, radio, computer etc
- cinema, theatre
- intellectual pursuits
- sports
- press
- internet
- music
- holidays
- exhibitions, museums
- artistic pursuits

PLACES

- asking the way and giving directions
- location

MEASURES AND SHAPES

- all digits and cardinal numbers
- telephone numbers
- height, length, weight, capacity, temperature
- dates, times, days
- shape

TRAVEL

- public transport
- private transport
- traffic
- holiday accommodation
- luggage
- travel documents
- signs and notices
- entering and leaving a country

RELATIONS WITH OTHER PEOPLE

- relationships
- correspondence
- behaviour
- invitations
- club membership
- government and politics
- crime and justice
- social affairs
- friends

HEALTH AND BODYCARE

- parts of the body
- personal comfort
- hygiene
- ailments, accidents
- medical services

SHOPPING

- shopping facilities

- foodstuffs
- clothes, fashion
- household articles
- prices

FOOD AND DRINK

- types of food and drink
- eating and drinking out

SERVICES

- post
- telephone
- banking
- police
- hospital, surgery
- garage
- petrol station
- emergency

LANGUAGE

- foreign language ability
- spelling and the alphabet

WEATHER

- give information about the climate and weather

EDUCATION

- subjects
- qualifications

Functions – Achiever Level – B1

(see topics list for contexts)

Personal environment

- asking for and giving personal information
- describing where one lives (accommodation, area etc)
- asking and answering questions for confirmation, information, identification
- describing people, places, things
- correcting information
- explaining daily routines
- narrating and describing past, present and future events
- comparing things, people
- reporting facts, actions.

Expressing thoughts, feelings and attitudes

- expressing and asking about agreement or disagreement
- denying something
- expressing views and feelings with reasons
- stating and asking about knowledge or ignorance of something or someone
- stating whether a person, thing or action is remembered or forgotten
- enquiring of someone else whether a person, thing or action is remembered or forgotten
- stating and asking about degrees of probability
- expressing, denying or asking about necessity (including logical deduction)
- stating and asking about one's certainty or uncertainty of something
- stating and asking about one's ability or inability to do something
- stating and enquiring about one's obligation (or lack of) to do something
- seeking, granting or denying permission
- stating and asking about the permissibility of doing something
- expressing and asking about wishes and hopes
- expressing and asking about wants, desires, needs

- stating and asking about intention
- stating, responding to and asking about preference
- expressing and asking about likes and dislikes, with reasons
- expressing and asking about (dis)pleasure, (un)happiness
- expressing and asking about satisfaction or dissatisfaction
- expressing disappointment
- expressing gratitude
- expressing and asking about interest or lack of it
- expressing surprise or lack of it
- expressing and asking about fear or worry
- giving reassurance
- expressing regret, sympathy
- offering and accepting an apology
- granting forgiveness
- expressing approval or appreciation
- expressing regret
- expressing indifference
- expressing and asking about approval or disapproval
- expressing moral obligation

Making things happen

- responding to a request
- requesting something or requesting someone to do something
- inviting someone to do something
- accepting or declining an offer or invitation
- giving instructions
- giving and asking for advice
- responding to or rejecting advice, with reasons
- warning others to be careful or to stop doing something

- offering and requesting assistance
- insisting politely
- persuading someone to do something
- suggesting a course of action
- asking for, responding to or rejecting suggestions with reason/alternative
- encouraging someone to do something
- making and agreeing plans and arrangements
- reaching a compromise
- prohibiting someone from doing something
- making a complaint
- social contact
- getting someone's attention
- greeting people and responding to greetings
- expressing thanks
- addressing somebody
- making and responding to introductions
- opening, closing a conversation
- congratulating someone
- praising someone
- paying a compliment
- asking someone's opinion
- indicating lack of understanding
- giving and asking for clarification or explanation of something
- confirming one's own or another's understanding
- asking someone to repeat a word, phrase or sentence
- asking someone to speak more slowly
- asking for help in finding words or phrases
- asking for and giving the spelling and meaning of words
- counting and using numbers

- asking for and telling people the time, day, date
- interrupting politely
- exemplifying or emphasising a point
- encouraging another speaker to continue
- indicating a wish to continue or finish speaking
- summing up
- taking leave
- observing telephone conventions

3.2 Grammar

Grammar – Preliminary (A1), Access (A2) and Achiever (B1) levels

Candidates may be exposed to the grammar required for the level above, but will not be tested on it. The standards set out in the following pages are cumulative. That is, a B1 candidate, for example, will be able to carry out the standards set across all three levels - A1, A2 and B1

	Preliminary	Access	Achiever
		as Preliminary and in addition	as Access and in addition
Simple sentences	word order in simple statements: subject-verb- object/adverb/adjective/prepositional phrase word order in instructions word order in questions There is/are + noun	There was/were	There has/have been There will be/there is going to be

	Preliminary	Access	Achiever
		as Preliminary and in addition	as Access and in addition
Compound sentences		<p>use of conjunctions <i>and/but/or</i></p> <p>word order subject-verb-(object) (+<i>and/but/or</i>) + subject-verb-(object)</p>	
Complex sentences		<p>Clauses of: time with <i>when, before, after</i></p> <p>reason <i>because</i>, result <i>so</i></p> <p>noun clause with <i>that</i></p>	<p>word order in complex sentences</p> <p>complex sentences with a subordinate clause</p> <p>defining relative clauses with <i>who, which, that</i></p> <p>clause as subject/object</p>

Verb forms

	Preliminary	Access	Achiever
		as Preliminary and in addition	as Access and in addition
Verb forms	<p>Present reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple present tense of be/have/do and common regular verbs present continuous of common verbs Have got <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes/no questions Question words: who/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 this level 	<p>Present reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple present with no time focus present continuous to express continuity <p>Past reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> past tense of regular and common irregular verbs with time markers <p>Future reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NP + <i>be going to</i>, present continuous and time markers <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> limited range of common verbs, <i>-ing</i> form, such as <i>like, go</i> verb + to + infinitive such as <i>want, hope</i> very common phrasal verbs such as <i>get up, get off</i> 	<p>Present/Past reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present perfect with <i>since/for/ever/never, yet/already, just</i> <p>Past reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>used to</i> for regular actions in the past past continuous <p>Future reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future simple verb forms, NP + <i>will</i> <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero and 1st conditional Range of verbs + <i>-ing</i> forms to + infinitive to express purpose common phrasal verbs and position of object pronouns, such as I looked it up

	Preliminary	Access	Achiever
		as Preliminary and in addition	as Access and in addition
	<i>let's + infinitive</i> for suggestion	<p>questions such as what time, how often, why, which</p> <p>simple question tags using all the verb forms at this level</p> <p>contracted forms appropriate to this level</p>	<p>simple reported/embedded statements and questions</p> <p>question tags using all verbs appropriate at the level</p> <p>contracted forms appropriate to this level</p>

Modals, nouns, pronouns, possessives, prepositions

	Preliminary	Access	Achiever
		as Preliminary and in addition	as Access and in addition
Modals	<p>Present reference:</p> <p><i>can, can't</i> (ability/inability, permission) and <i>would like</i> (request)</p>	<p>Modals and forms with similar meaning:</p> <p><i>must</i> (obligation)</p> <p><i>mustn't</i> (prohibition)</p> <p>have to, had got to (need)</p> <p>can, could (requests)</p> <p><i>couldn't</i> (impossibility)</p> <p><i>may</i> (permission)</p> <p>single modal adverbs: possibly, probably, perhaps</p>	<p>Modals and forms with similar meaning:</p> <p><i>should</i> (obligation, advice)</p> <p><i>might, may, will, probably</i> (possibility and probability in the future)</p> <p>would/should (advice)</p> <p><i>need to</i> (obligation)</p> <p><i>needn't</i> (lack of obligation)</p> <p><i>will definitely</i> (certainty in the future)</p> <p><i>may I</i> (asking for permission)</p> <p><i>I'd rather</i> (stating preference)</p>
Nouns	<p>regular and common irregular plural forms</p> <p>very common uncountable nouns</p> <p>cardinal numbers 1-31</p>	<p>countable and uncountable nouns</p> <p>simple nouns phrases</p> <p>cardinal numbers up to 100, multiples of 100</p>	<p>noun phrases with pre- and post-modification such as <i>fair-haired people with sensitive skin</i></p> <p>all cardinal numbers</p>

	Preliminary	Access	Achiever
		as Preliminary and in addition	as Access and in addition
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 <i>mine, yours, whose</i>	As Access
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 <i>at home, on the left, on Monday, at six o'clock</i>	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 <i>after dinner, before tea</i>	wide range of prepositions, such as <i>beyond, above, beneath, below</i> prepositional phrases such as in her twenties, of average height, in the top right hand corner

Articles, determiners, adjectives, adverbs, intensifiers

	Preliminary	Access	Achiever
		as Preliminary and in addition	as Access and in addition
Articles	Definite, indefinite	definite article zero article with uncountable nouns definite article with superlatives	definite article with post-modification, such as the <i>present you gave me</i> use of indefinite article in definitions, such as <i>an architect is a person who designs buildings</i>
Determiners	any, some, a lot of	all, none, not (any), enough, (a) few, (a) little, many, more, most, much, no	a range of determiners, eg <i>all the, most, both</i>
Adjectives	common adjectives in front of a noun demonstrative adjectives <i>this, that, these, those</i> ordinal numbers 1-31	order of adjectives comparative, superlative, regular and common irregular forms use of <i>than</i> ordinal numbers up to 100 and multiples of 100	adjectives ending <i>-ed</i> and <i>-ing</i> such as <i>tired</i> and <i>tiring</i> comparative structures, eg <i>as.....as, is the same as, not so...as..., looks like/is like</i> all ordinal numbers
Adverbs	simple adverbs of place, manner and time, such as <i>here, slowly, now</i>	simple adverbs and adverbial phrases: sequencing, time and place, frequency, manner	more complex adverbial phrases of time, place, frequency, manner, eg <i>as soon as possible</i>

	Preliminary	Access	Achiever
		as Preliminary and in addition	as Access and in addition
		position of adverbs and word order of adverbial phrases	
Intensifiers	very, really	quite, so, a bit	a range of intensifiers such as <i>too</i> , <i>enough</i>

Punctuation and spelling

	Preliminary	Access	Achiever
		as Preliminary and in addition	as Access and in addition
Punctuation	use of capital letters and full stops	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 personal keywords and familiar words	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	sentence connectives: <i>then, next</i>	adverbs to indicate sequence (<i>first, finally</i>) use of substitution (<i>I think so, I hope so</i>) markers to structure spoken discourse (<i>Right, well, OK</i>)	markers to indicate addition (<i>also</i>), sequence (<i>in the first place</i>), contrast (<i>on the other hand</i>) markers to structure spoken discourse, (<i>anyway, by the way</i>) use of ellipsis in informal situations (<i>got to go</i>) use of vague language (<i>I think, you know</i>)

4. Overview of Assessment for ESOL International (Speaking & Listening)

LanguageCert ESOL International (Speaking & Listening) examinations are assessed against the following criteria:

- **Listening & Responding:** the ability to understand interlocutor prompts and respond appropriately
- **Interactive Communication and Task Fulfilment:** the ability to understand and maintain the interaction, and manage the tasks adequately for the level
- **Accuracy and Range of Grammar:** the ability to demonstrate a range and control of grammar for the level
- **Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary:** the ability to demonstrate a range and control of vocabulary for the level
- **Pronunciation, Intonation and Fluency:** the ability to connect utterances, maintain the flow and engage in effective communicative exchanges

The grades awarded will be either Pass or Fail.

Candidates are awarded a mark from 0 to 10 for Listening and Responding. For each of the four other criteria candidates are awarded a mark from 0 to 5.

The maximum raw marks they can get across the four parts of the test is 30.

Overall Result Determination

The maximum available raw marks for the International ESOL (Speaking & Listening) exam are 30, regardless of the level. There are two possible overall grades: Pass and Fail. The table below shows what the requirements for each grade are.

International ESOL skill	Maximum raw marks	Grades
Speaking & Listening	30	Fail 0-17 Pass 18-30

The assessment of the candidate is carried out by the Marking Interlocutor. The test is recorded for auditing purposes, and LanguageCert Marking Examiners assess the candidate's performance based on a set of criteria and descriptors of performance for each level.

5. Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are reasonable adjustments and a reasonable adjustment must be applied for using the LanguageCert Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy.

Access arrangements allow candidates with learning difficulties, disabilities or temporary injuries to show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. Examples include: a reader to read the questions and a scribe to write the answers.

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. For some arrangements, including readers and scribes, centres must apply to LanguageCert for permission before the examination. Please refer to the LanguageCert Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy for the specific timeframes to apply for permission. For information on arrangements not listed here, please contact LanguageCert. Specific contact details can be located in the LanguageCert "Contact us Guide".

The International English for Speakers of Other Languages (Speaking) examination assesses the candidate's speaking ability and oral communication skills. As a result, certain access arrangements cannot be permitted or are not applicable. Examples are given in the following table.

Access Arrangement	Definition	Speaking
Extra Time		Yes
Reader	Someone who reads the questions to the candidate	N/A
Braille or Modified question papers	A range of formats are available, including large print and zoom in functionality	Yes
Practical Assistant	Someone who helps with practical tasks not related to the test	Yes
Supervised rest breaks	The candidate must remain under exam conditions	Yes
Sign Language Interpreter	To sign the questions	No
Transcript	Where the candidate's handwriting is illegible	N/A

Exemptions can only be considered as a last resort. For more information, please contact LanguageCert.

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