



THE OXFORD TCC OFFICIAL GUIDELINES



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 4** Welcome to The Oxford Tutorial College Certificate!
- 5** Stages of The Oxford TCC
 - Diagnostic
 - Mock
 - Certificate
- 6** The Oxford TCC for Basic Users – A1/A2
 - A1 – Beginner Level
 - A2 – Upper Basic Level
- 10** The Oxford TCC for Independent Users – B1/B2
 - B1 – Intermediate Level
 - B2 – Upper Intermediate Level
- 14** The Oxford TCC for Proficient Users – C1/C2
 - C1 – Advanced Level
 - C2 – Mastery Level
- 20** The Oxford TCC Key Skills
 - Use of English
 - Reading
 - Listening
 - Writing
 - Speaking
- 26** General Tips for Teachers and Candidates
- 28** The Oxford TCC - Frequently Asked Questions

WELCOME TO THE OXFORD TUTORIAL COLLEGE CERTIFICATE!

We have designed the Oxford Tutorial College Certificate (The Oxford TCC) with the goal of giving English learners access to a certified qualification of achievement and participation in the English language, which would allow them to discover their abilities in a second language. Our exam materials are created by an academic team from London, supported by regional consultants. The exam is administered and marked by native speaking professionals only. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is the guideline we use to assess the achievements of English language learners, as it is an internationally recognised standard.

In accordance with this guideline, the Oxford TCC identifies the language skills that the learner currently has. All grades are split into three main levels, starting with basic users, which includes A1 beginner level and A2 upper basic level. It then continues through to learners becoming independent users, including a B1 intermediate level and a B2 upper intermediate level. Finally, there is the proficient level, which consists of C1 advanced level, and C2, which is mastery. The Oxford TCC assesses all areas of language learning, including reading and listening comprehension, use of English, speaking and writing.

Each candidate will receive an Oxford Tutorial College Certificate according to the results of their exam. This not only gives them a tool to measure their English language level, but also a competitive advantage over their peers. Whether they are in school, university or the workplace, we hope that candidates will find this a very useful certification, as it provides them with an additional level of prestige and proof of linguistic ability.

REMEMBER THAT HAVING AN INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH CERTIFICATE IS NO LONGER A PLUS, IT'S A MUST!

Oxford Education Academic Team
Changing the world one candidate at a time!

STAGES OF THE OXFORD TCC EXPLAINED

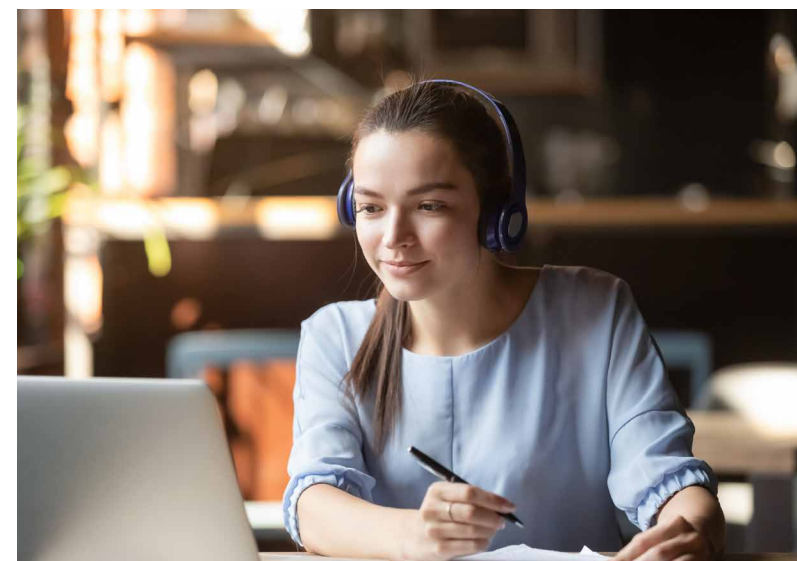
The Oxford TCC is carried out in three stages:

01. DIAGNOSTIC

Objective: the diagnostic test will detect the applicant's English language level, according to the CEFR (from A1 to C2 level).

How it works: the diagnostic will test four different skills: Use of English, Reading, Listening and Writing. The candidate will have to answer a series of multiple choice questions. Based on the number of correct answers that the applicant has given, the system will determine the applicant's level. Following this, the candidate will undertake the written part of the test. The average of all four abilities will determine the candidate's current level.

In most cases the current level will be the level we suggest for the mock and certificate. If, however, a candidate is very close to the 60% passing threshold, we may suggest that they take the level above their current level e.g. candidate 1 scored higher than 60% in the A2 part of the diagnostic test and then 58% in the B1 part, their current level is A2 but we will offer the suggested mock level of B1.



02. MOCK

Objective: the mock exam represents an opportunity for candidates and teachers to re-evaluate the candidate's English level, as detected by the diagnostic test, to ensure that candidates take the appropriate level in the certificate exam. It also supplies further practice for the certificate exam, ensuring that the candidate is sufficiently prepared.

How it works: the mock exam will test three skills: Use of English, Reading and Listening. Based on the results of the mock, the system will determine whether the certificate exam will be done at the level established in the diagnostic test and tested in the mock or if it should be carried out at a lower level. The mock will never recommend a higher level than the one achieved in the diagnostic.

In case a candidate scores extremely well in the mock, it is important to remember that the levels suggested by the diagnostic and mock are our guideline, you are free to overrule our decision and choose your candidates' levels at any time. This, however, increases the risk of your candidates failing the certification exam, and it is not recommended.

03. CERTIFICATION

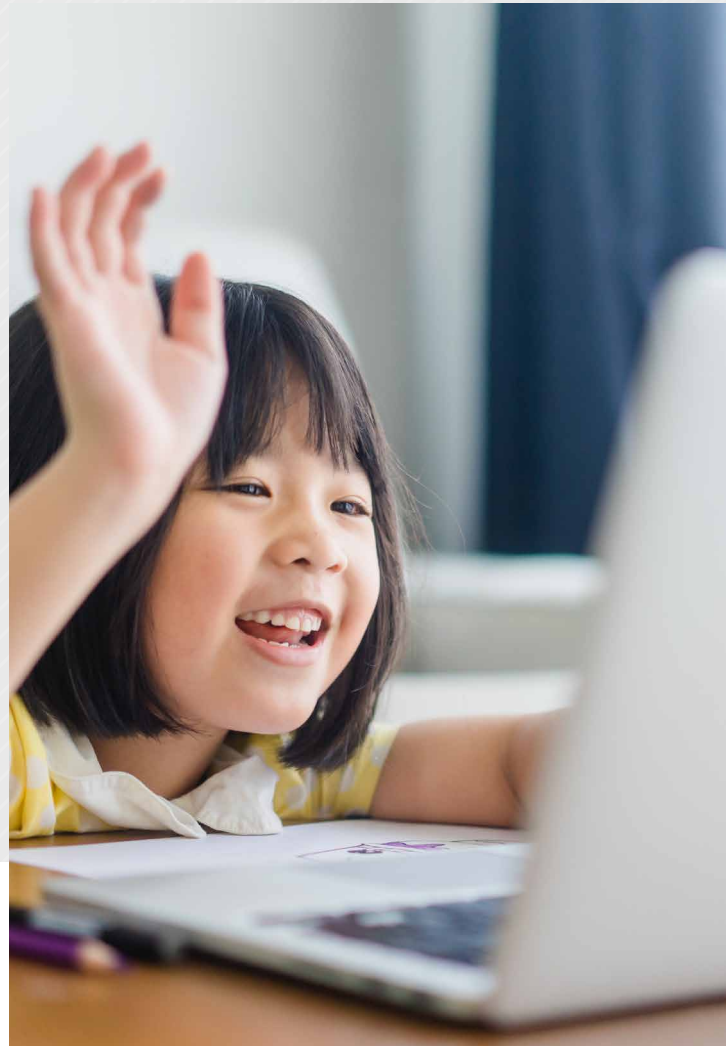
Objective: the certification is the exam with official recognition. Having taken the diagnostic and mock tests, the candidate's level should be well-settled by now. If their score meets the passing threshold, they will receive the Oxford TCC certificate according to the level tested.

How it works: candidates will be tested on five skills in the certificate exam: Use of English, Reading, Listening, Writing and Speaking, giving a comprehensive analysis of the candidate's actual English level. The speaking examination will be carried out by a native English speaker, online or in person.

THE OXFORD TCC FOR BASIC USERS A1-A2

In the A1-A2 levels, candidates will show proficient competence to:

- Understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters
- Describe in simple terms aspects of their background, environment and matters in areas of immediate need
- Use functional grammatical skills in the past, present and future contexts, etc.
- Read short, simple texts and find specific, predictable information
- Understand phrases and common vocabulary related to areas of personal relevance
- Understand the main points in short, clear and simple messages



A1 - BEGINNER LEVEL

This level is the first of the six learning levels recommended in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Level A1 in the Oxford TCC evaluates candidates' level in English at the beginning of their learning.

USE OF ENGLISH

Candidates will have to demonstrate the ability to:

- Select the correct form of the verb “to be” matching the subject of the sentence in order to form affirmative and interrogative sentences in the present tense
- Identify the correct form of the auxiliary verb “to do” matching the subject of the sentence and the correct form of the main verb in order to form interrogative sentences in the present simple tense

- Select the correct form of the verb matching the subject of the sentence and the correct ending of the main verb to form affirmative or interrogative sentences in the present continuous tense
- Recognise the correct form of the verb matching the subject of the sentence in order to form negative sentences in the present progressive tense
- Recognise the correct Wh – question in present simple in order to ask for information
- Relate visual input with grammatical knowledge to select the correct missing preposition
- Reorganise each one of the elements of a sentence to structure it correctly



SPEAKING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the ability to:

- Respond appropriately to simple everyday greetings
- Reproduce simple vocabulary associated with personal details and specific situations and contexts
- Use simple grammatical structures (present simple, present continuous, past simple, past continuous and future ‘will’/‘going to’, basic prepositions of place and time and basic connecting words (e.g. ‘and’, ‘but’) to talk about what they see in pictures and about familiar everyday events and situations
- Express basic communication by asking and answering simple questions about pictures and people
- Show understanding by following simple instructions, identifying basic elements of pictures and finding differences between two picture

READING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the ability to:

- Show understanding of level-appropriate material
- Choose the correct answer from a set of 2 or 3 options in order to answer questions regarding both general and more detailed information about the text
- Choose the correct answer from a set of ‘True’ or ‘False’ options
- Use strategies during reading to help gather the meaning of the text

LISTENING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the ability to:

- Show understanding of basic conversations on familiar and daily routines
- Choose the correct answer between a set of ‘True’ or ‘False’ statements related to the audio content
- Use strategies during listening to gather the meaning of the audio content
- Match audio and visual input in order to answer detailed information about the audio content
- Show general understanding by completing missing information

WRITING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the ability to:

- Write short texts, describing places and people, using simple words and basic expressions
- Write notes/invitations or talk about themselves (e.g. likes and dislikes, family etc.)



A2 - UPPER BASIC LEVEL

This is the second step after initiating English language learning. Level A2 in The Oxford TCC evaluates candidates' academic skills to decide if they are qualified to continue advancing towards other levels.

USE OF ENGLISH

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous level, as well as the ability to:

- Select the correct missing time preposition ('at'/'on')
- Recognise the correct form of the modal verb "can" in affirmative and negative forms in order to talk about ability/inability
- Select the correct form of the verb "to have" matching the subject in the present simple tense
- Distinguish between present continuous or future simple in order to talk about future events
- Recognise the correct form of irregular adverbs when modifying a verb
- Select between the singular or plural form of uncountable nouns or mass nouns that you cannot quantify or count (e.g. hair or hairs)
- Recognise the correct form of the modal verb "should" in affirmative and negative forms when giving advice
- Select the correct form of the verb "to be" matching the subject of the sentence to form affirmative, negative or interrogative sentences in the past simple tense
- Recognise the correct form of the auxiliary verb "to do" matching the subject of the sentence to form negative or interrogative sentences in the present simple tense



READING

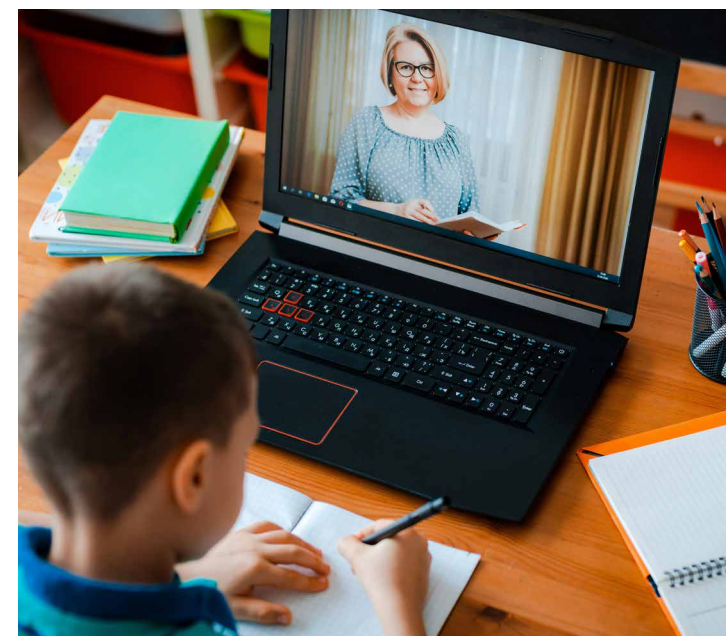
Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous level, as well as the ability to:

- Show understanding of the overall idea of level-appropriate texts
- Choose the correct answer between a set of 3 options in order to answer questions about general and more detailed information from the text
- Use strategies during reading to help gather the meaning of the text

LISTENING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous level, as well as the ability to:

- Show understanding of material such as news reports and basic conversations
- Locate and use essential data from a recording in order to outline detailed information
- Match audio input with a set of options in order to correctly answer questions that test comprehension
- Use strategies during listening to gather the meaning of unfamiliar phrases or vocabulary



SPEAKING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Communicate simple information about everyday activities
- Show a degree of control of simple grammatical forms (present simple/present continuous, past simple/past continuous, future simple: will/going, prepositions of time, modal verbs)
- Express a sequence of events using simple language structures and expressions like "at first", "then", "later", "finally" and conjunctions like "and", "but" or "because"
- Use simple comparisons between persons, objects and daily activities
- Reproduce very short utterances even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are evident
- Express ideas and choices by answering simple questions supported by visual

WRITING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous level, as well as the ability to write short texts:

- Describing past experiences (e.g. writing a short letter for pen pals)
- Giving opinions (e.g. reviewing a television programme)
- Describing a situation or routine
- Stating wishes for the future
- Using simple phrases and sentences with simple connectors like 'and', 'but', and 'because'

THE OXFORD TCC FOR INDEPENDENT USERS

B1 - B2

In the B1 and B2 levels, candidates will show proficient competence to:

- Understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meanings
- Do assessments, express wishes, report statements, inversions, etc.
- Understand the main ideas of complex texts on both concrete and abstract topics
- Use more complex structures and recognise increasingly advanced grammatical patterns
- Read articles and reports about contemporary problems
- Complete well-structured exercises on complex subjects, showing controlled use of grammatical patterns



B1 - INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

At B1 level candidates will demonstrate the language competence that meets the requirements specified by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, which corresponds to users who have the necessary fluency to communicate with native speakers with some effort, mainly on familiar topics.

USE OF ENGLISH

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Select the correct form of comparative adjectives to describe differences
- Choose correct verb conjugations to form affirmative sentences in the “future simple” or “be going to” forms

- Select the correct form of verbs to form affirmative, negative and interrogative sentences in the present perfect
- Distinguish between “since” and “for” in the present perfect tense when talking about a point in the past or a period of time
- Distinguish between “enough” and “too” when stating minimum and maximum requirements
- Produce the correct form of verbs in the present simple or future simple in order to form first conditional sentences
- Modify verbs to form error-free sentences



SPEAKING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Coherently interact with a native speaker about everyday topics and themes of personal interest
- Describe a picture and talk about it for an extended period of time (1 min)
- Apply background grammatical and lexical knowledge to participate in different types of interaction when talking about their present situation and events, past experiences and events, future projects and situations, likes, dislikes, preferences and routines
- Show understanding of intermediate-level instructions
- Construct opinions and messages in a logical, organised sequence which makes them intelligible for the recipient

READING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Choose the correct answer between a set of 3 options in order to demonstrate comprehension of an intermediate-level text
- Choose the correct answer between a set of ‘True’, ‘False’ and ‘Does not specify’ options
- Use strategies during reading to help gather the meaning of the text from the context

LISTENING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Show understanding of level-appropriate dialogues and monologues such as reports, announcements and conversations
- Locate and use essential data from an audio extract in order to answer questions with 3 or 4 options that test listening comprehension
- Establish general understanding by completing missing information
- Match audio and visual input in order to show understanding of detailed information

WRITING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to write:

- Straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within their field of interest, by linking a series of shorter elements into a linear sequence (e.g. writing a letter, e-mail etc.)



B2 - UPPER INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

Level B2 measures the candidates' skills needed to accomplish the standards required for this level by the CEFR, which corresponds to them having the necessary fluency to communicate without effort with native speakers.

USE OF ENGLISH

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Select the correct form of the verb corresponding to the subject-verb inversion structures
- Produce the correct forms of the verbs in the simple past or future in the past in order to form second conditional sentences
- Select the correct form of the modal verb "must" in affirmative or negative form
- Rewrite sentences in the present and present continuous passive voice
- Correctly deal with questions that require understanding of reported speech
- Select the correct form of the auxiliary verb "will" to form affirmative and negative sentences in zero and first conditionals
- Identify the correct form and tense of the auxiliary verb "have" to form negative sentences in the third conditional
- Determine the correct grammatical construction for the superlative and comparative forms of adjectives



READING

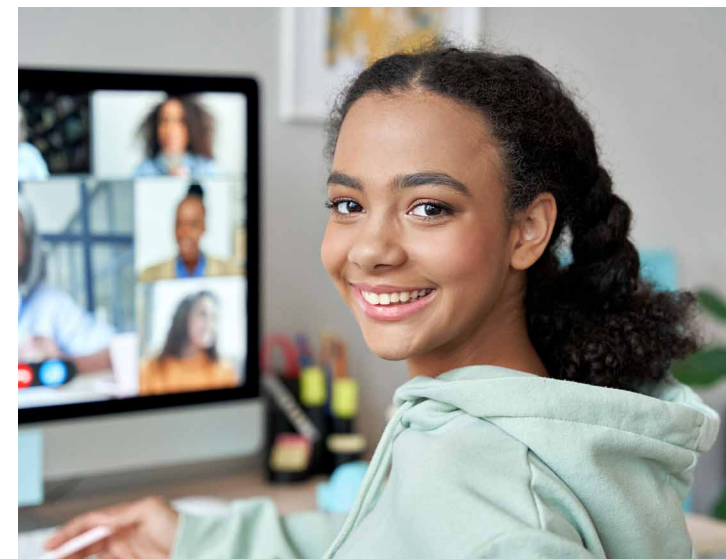
Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Choose the correct answer from a set of 3 or 4 options in order to outline general and more detailed information from the text
- Choose the correct answer between two columns of 8 options, one unnecessary option included, in order to outline general information from the text

LISTENING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Show understanding of complex conversations such as reports, interviews and news
- Choose the correct answer from a set of 3 or 4 options in order to demonstrate a clear understanding of audio extracts containing rapid and complex speech
- Choose the correct answer between a set of 'True', 'False' and 'Does not specify' options in order to pinpoint precise content of complex monologues and dialects
- Keep up with native speakers conversing at normal and unaltered speeds



SPEAKING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Show a high degree of control of a range of simple and complex grammatical forms to communicate fluently and accurately
- Express opinions when talking about events, past experiences, preferences using agreement or disagreement and/or their feelings (positive or negative)
- Converse with a native speaker on familiar themes with little to no hesitation and with few to no breakdowns in the flow of conversation
- Speculate about pictures and talk about them for an extended period of time, though hesitant at times
- Use a range of cohesive devices/linking words and discourse markers
- Accurately produce language with a good range of relatively well-chosen and complex vocabulary
- Present information in a logical, organised sequence
- Answer more complex questions supported by visuals and show understanding of simple replies

WRITING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

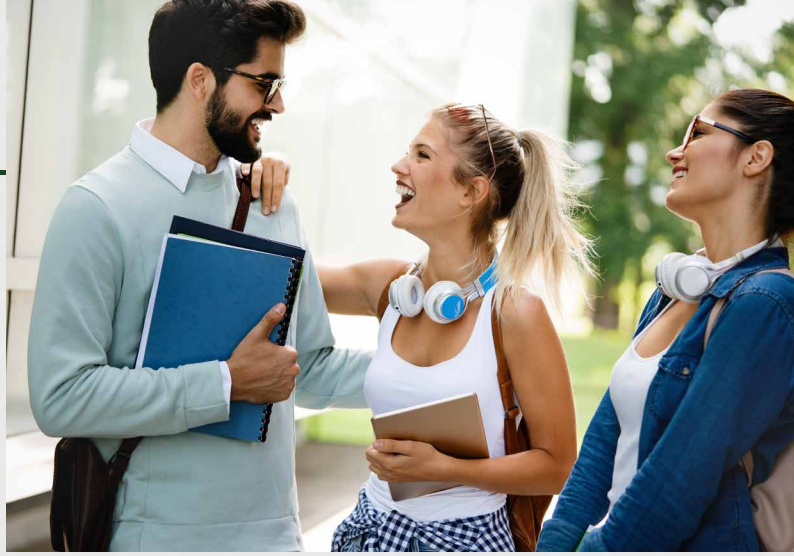
- Write clear and detailed texts, using simple and perfect tenses and reported speech (direct and indirect)
- Write on a variety of subjects, synthesising and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources. They must also be able to express opinions about a specific topic

THE OXFORD TCC FOR PROFICIENT USERS

C1 - C2

At the C1 and C2 levels, candidates will show proficient competence to:

- Study demanding subjects at the highest academic level
- Make useful notes to both themselves and to colleagues, even where the subject matter is complex and/or unfamiliar
- Write and summarise complex pieces of writing
- Understand any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, delivered at a fast native speed and understand any kind of spoken language
- Follow complex interactions between third parties in group discussion and debate, even on abstract, complex unfamiliar topics
- Extract specific information from poor quality, audibly distorted public announcements
- Understand complex technical information, such as operating instructions or specifications for familiar products and services
- Understand content in films, plays, TV and the radio almost as fully as a native speaker
- Read with ease virtually all forms of the written language
- Scan texts for relevant information, and grasp the main topic of a text
- Paraphrase or summarize effectively
- Use language flexibly and effectively for social purposes
- Talk about complex or sensitive issues, and deal confidently with difficult questions
- Negotiate and persuade effectively in international settings
- Take part without effort in all types of conversation or discussion with native speakers
- Follow and contribute to complex interactions between third parties in group discussions
- Use the telephone confidently, even if the line is bad or the caller has a non-standard accent
- Give coherent explanations
- Answer unpredictable questions
- Use contextual, grammatical and lexical cues to infer attitude, mood and intentions and anticipate what will come next
- Make proper use of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms
- Select an appropriate formulation from a broad range of language to express him/herself clearly, without having to restrict what he/she wants to say
- Make suitable use of grammatical complex structures
- Consistently maintain a high degree of grammatical accuracy
- Master English to an outstanding level



C1 - ADVANCED LEVEL

The Oxford TCC level C1 guarantees that the candidate's journey through the language has been a success, and certifies that they have attained an advanced level of English with knowledge that goes far beyond routine and normal everyday interactions i.e. on academic and professional topics.

USE OF ENGLISH

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

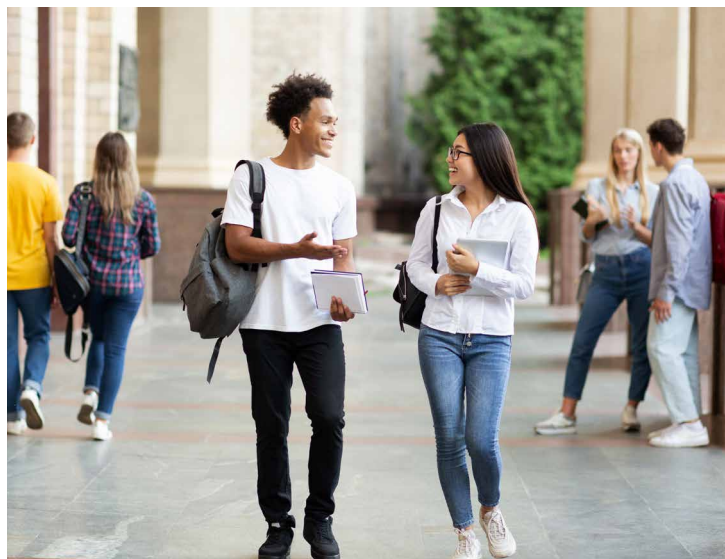
- Select the correct form of auxiliary verbs to form inversions using negative adverbs at the beginning of the sentence
- Select the correct form of the verb corresponding to the "I wish" structure when talking about imaginary or hypothetical situations or events in the present or past
- Select the correct form of the verb corresponding to the "would rather" structure when stating a preference about things we want another person to do
- Correctly match prepositions and verbs to create phrasal verbs
- Choose the correct structure in order to form a cleft sentence with "what"
- Select the correct form of a verb in order to complete sentences in any tense, mood or voice
- Correctly deal with relative pronouns in order to accurately complete sentences



READING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Show understanding of extremely detailed texts through identification and analysis of main ideas, supporting details and patterns of organisation and development
- Infer the writer's intention by picking up on subtle differences of word selection for emphasis, irony or exaggeration
- Choose the correct answer between a set of 'True', 'False' and 'Does not specify' options in order to demonstrate complete understanding of the text



LISTENING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Show understanding of a wide variety of complex monologues, dialogue and conversations such as radio programmes or historic narrations
- Choose the correct answer between a set of 4 options in order to demonstrate comprehension of the audio extract
- Ascertain a nuanced understanding of the speaker's intentions and points of view on complex topics
- Use strategies during listening to gather the meaning of almost any utterance on familiar or unfamiliar topics from the context, intonation and pattern of interaction



SPEAKING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Compose, exchange and express ideas and opinions employing a broad range of grammatical structures and lexis talking about familiar and unfamiliar topics and situations, participating in several types of interaction easily and effectively, showing only minor errors
- Use appropriate and suitable vocabulary correctly in a wide variety of topics without impeding the natural flow of conversation a native speaker would hold
- Construct and formulate long and short questions, answers and sentences relevant to the topic and situation
- Get involved in several types of interaction; hypothesising, comparing, contrasting, interpreting, judging, supporting and justifying perspectives and ideas using clear, fluent and well-organised language, without too much hesitation
- Select accurate and relevant language to agree or disagree on varied topics and situations and provide conclusions
- Create and sustain effective communication for an extended period of time following the natural turns conversations take at a native level
- Create and sustain effective communication combining elements of pronunciation (intonation, accent, rhythm) accurately, using the correct sounds and stressing the precise elements of words and words in statements
- Reason through a situation to ultimately come to a decisive conclusion



WRITING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Write clear, well-structured texts on complex subjects, underlining the relevant salient issues, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples, and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion
- Write complex texts, while also choosing the appropriate style for writing. They must be able to employ the structure and conventions of a variety of written genres, varying the tone, style and register according to the addressee, text type and theme
- Can express him/herself with clarity and precision in personal correspondence, using language flexibly and effectively, including emotional, allusive and joking usage.

C2 - MASTERY LEVEL

Level C2 is the highest and most advanced of the six learning levels established in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. It certifies sufficient linguistic competence to perfectly handle any kind of exercises with a great deal of semantic and grammatical precision. Candidates are required to have a high degree of specialisation and complexity, which goes far beyond fluency in everyday situations.

USE OF ENGLISH

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Identify the correct noun with an added suffix to complete a sentence
- Flawlessly fuse verbs and prepositions to correctly create any phrasal verb according to a given definition, and choose between apparently similar options
- Choose the correct forms of ellipses and substitution when reformulating ideas
- Select the correct and appropriate word from a set of 3 or 4 similar options depending on the meaning of a sentence
- Reconstruct sentences with the given clues
- Form affirmative sentences in all tenses, voices and moods, including the future perfect and future continuous
- Form sentences using reflexive pronouns
- Form sentences using interrogative possessive determiners
- Recognise the correct relative pronoun between a set of 3 or 4 options in order to complete a sentence



WRITING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Write fluently texts and clear ideas or opinions using complex expressions, grammar structures with complete accuracy
- Write complex texts (e.g. article, essay, letter, report, review etc.) in an appropriate and effective style and a logical structure that helps the reader identify the significant points
- Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, complex reports, articles or essays which present a case, or give critical appreciation of proposals or literary works.
- Can write fully engrossing stories and descriptions of experience in a style appropriate to the genre adopted.

READING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Show understanding of a wide variety of highly complex and specific texts such as specialised articles and literary works
- Select appropriate vocabulary from the text to aid in overall comprehension
- Draw on a wide variety of complex vocabulary to decipher complex themes and intentions

LISTENING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Show understanding of any kind of spoken language, even when delivered at a fast native speed and containing any degree of unfamiliar terminology
- Identify the speaker's intentions by picking up on subtle differences in tone and word selection to read between the lines
- Select the correct answer between a set of 3 or 4 options in order to demonstrate comprehension of specified and implied information from the audio extract
- Use strategies during listening to gather the meaning of unfamiliar utterances or words from a variety of clues
- Distinguish between facts and inferences
- Show understanding of a wide range of recorded audio material, identify finer points of detail, including implicit attitudes and relationships among speakers

SPEAKING

Candidates will have to demonstrate the abilities required in the previous levels, as well as the ability to:

- Present and develop clear, smooth arguments, views and ideas with an effective, logical and organised structure
- Sustain grammatical control of elaborated language and use a full range of constructions naturally and appropriately with only very infrequent unsuitability
- Successfully and accurately communicate on any topic at the speed dictated by their conversation partner without suffering misunderstandings or imprecise formulations
- Use a good command of idiomatic expressions with awareness of connotative levels of meaning
- Produce coherent pieces of discourse using a full range of connecting words and cohesive devices appropriately
- Contribute to joint discourse with fully natural turn-taking, referencing, allusion making, comparing and contrasting, supporting and justifying viewpoints
- Use a full range of pronunciation elements (stress, intonation, accent, rhythm, etc.) with accuracy and precision to enhance communication beyond literal meaning of spoken words



THE OXFORD TCC KEY SKILLS

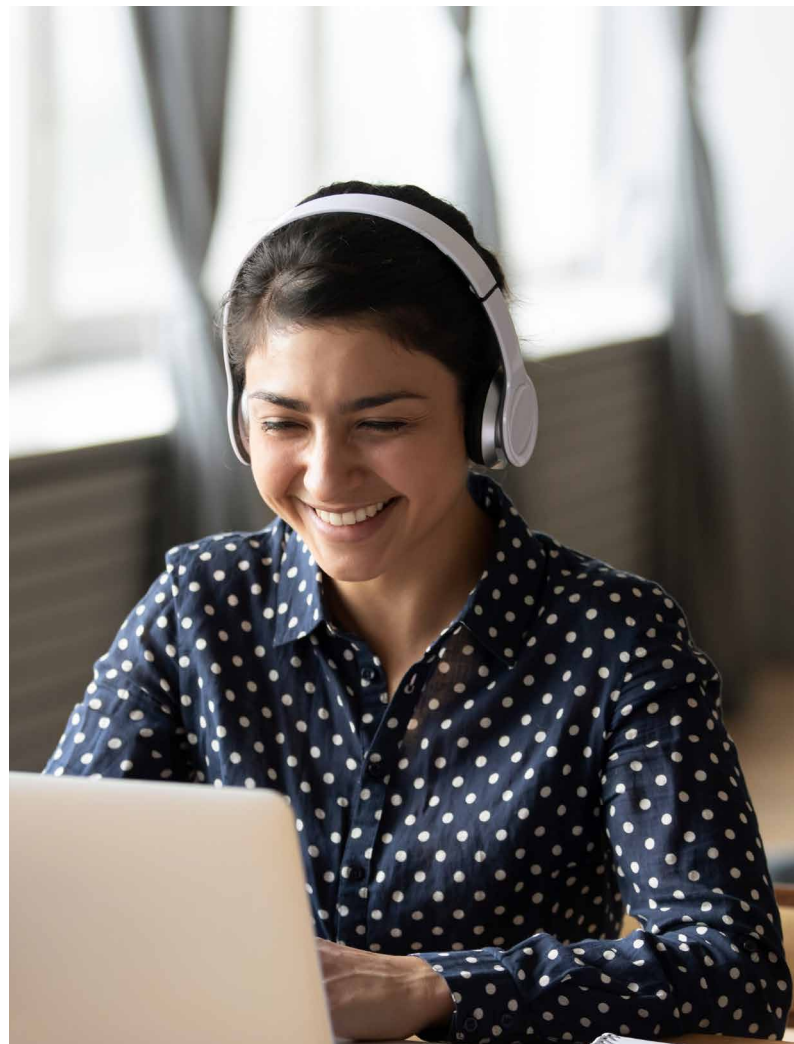
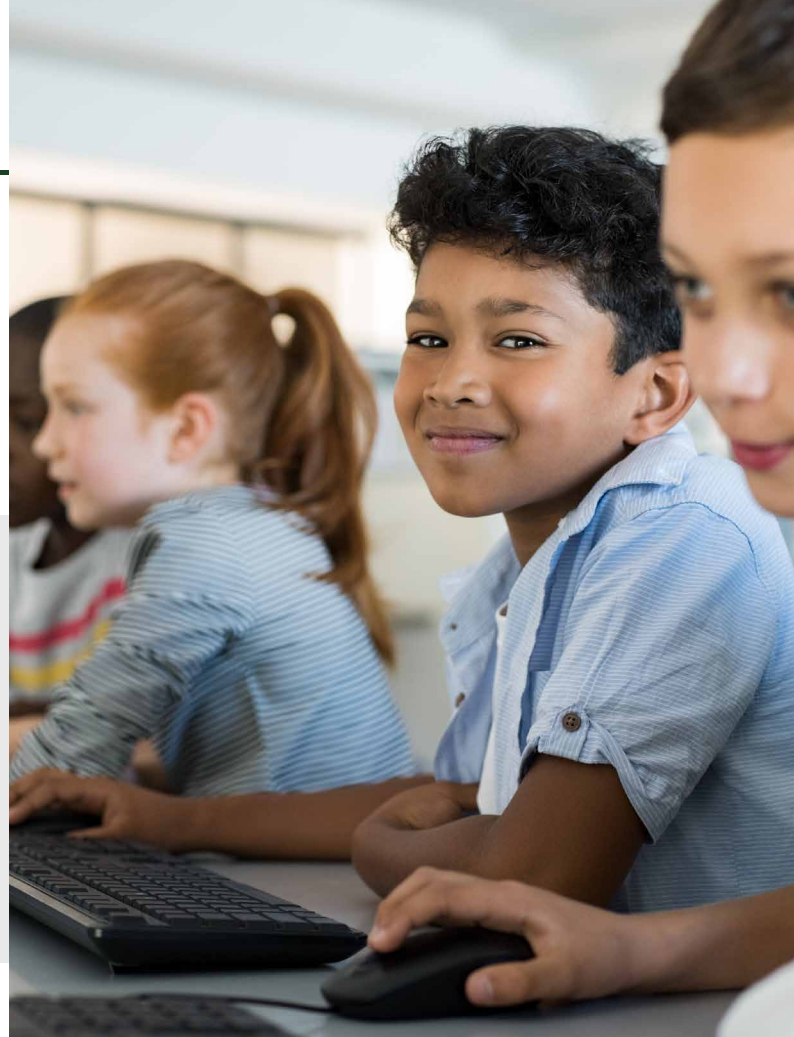
01. USE OF ENGLISH

This part of the exam evaluates the candidates' knowledge and command of the language. Depending on the level obtained in the Diagnostic Test (A1 to C2), they will be tested on the use of different grammar structures, as outlined in the description provided in this Guidebook for each level.

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

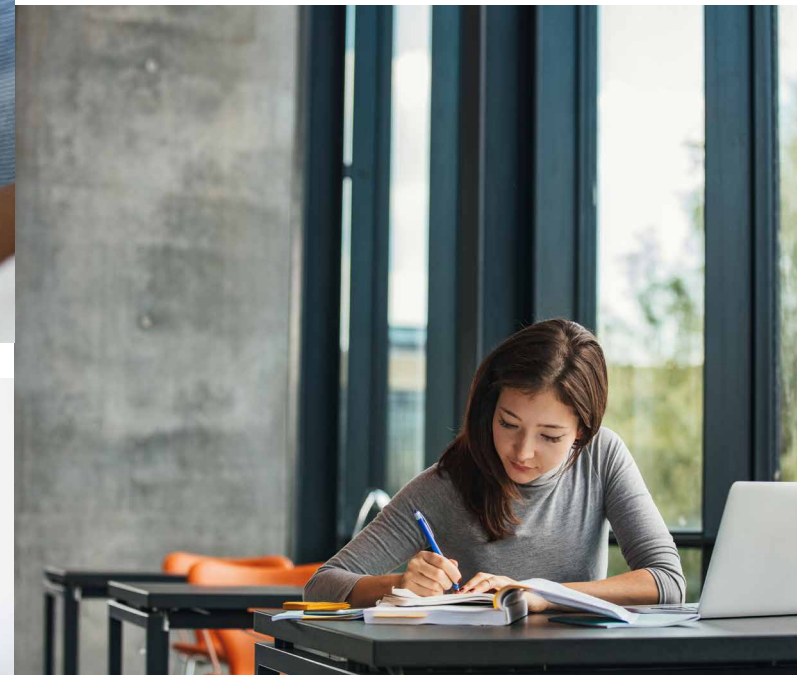
Make sure that your candidates:

- Possess level-appropriate knowledge of grammar structures and have practised the structures that will be tested (detailed information on this is provided next to each level in the previous section of the Guidebook)
- Try to practise with online timed exercises, so that they get used to working under time pressure
- Always read the instructions carefully before answering a question
- Pay attention to spelling and capitalisation if the question involves filling in a blank, rewriting etc.
- Have enough time at the end to check their answers before submitting the section



02. READING

This part of the exam evaluates how well the candidates read and understand the English language. They will have to read a text and then answer questions regarding its content that will prove their comprehension ability.



TIPS FOR TEACHERS

Make sure that your candidates:

- Read a wide variety of texts on different topics, from the library or the internet. Lower levels (A1/A2) would benefit from reading short articles, short stories, graded readers for their level (e.g. Sherlock Holmes for A2 level) etc. Independent users (B1/B2) could read similar materials, although with a higher level of difficulty, and advanced users (C1/C2) could read articles, reports, short stories, novels, biographies etc.
- Some good online resources for English learners are Breaking News English and BBC Learning English (for all levels), or Time for Kids (for lower levels). Magazines such as The New Yorker, The Economist or The Economist's 1843 magazine are also great resources for more advanced readers
- Have enough practice with essential reading skills, such as skimming (reading the text quickly to get the main idea), scanning (reading the text to find certain information), as well as reading for detail (reading carefully to understand everything)
- When reading for pleasure or in preparation for the exam, note down any words they don't know and their meaning in a 'word book' – with constant review of this, they will be able to expand their vocabulary, which in turn will help them during the reading part of the examination
- Read the text first during the examination so they know where to find the answers to the questions. Following this, they need to try and answer the questions – they can go back and read the text again if they still don't know the answers to some of the questions
- Don't use their personal opinions or general knowledge to answer the questions – they need to make sure that the answer is contained in the text
- Are not put off by difficult vocabulary (for B1 levels and above) – practise obtaining the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrase from the context

03.

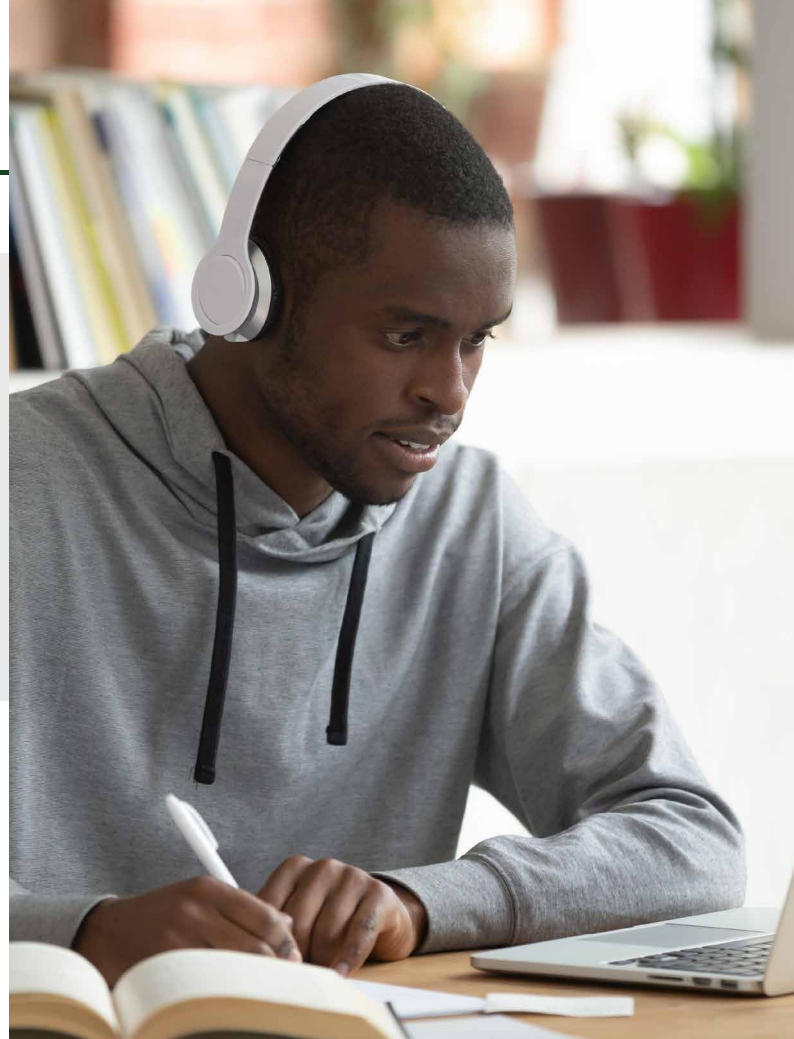
LISTENING

The listening part of the exam tests candidates' ability to hear and understand people speaking in English in various contexts. They will have to listen to a series of audio extracts and then answer a set of questions about them to demonstrate their listening comprehension.

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

Make sure that your candidates:

- Listen to native speakers as much as they can, for example through online resources, such as video clips, radio stations, podcasts, talks, as well as websites specifically designed for English learners (e.g. British Council's Learn English Teens). For more advanced levels, news broadcasts, documentaries, TED Talks, plays, TV series and movies in English also represent important resources
- Listen to the audio extract for the first time while reading the questions, to see where in the extract they will find the answer. They should try to pay attention to both the audio and the questions at the same time, as this could be the most time-effective strategy.
- Are aware they can then listen a second time to answer the questions they missed when listening for the first time, as well as check the answers they gave
- Don't worry if they miss a question – they should continue with the other questions and then listen again for the missing information
- Are aware that they will not be punished for incorrect answers



04.

WRITING

The writing part for the Oxford TCC will test the candidates' ability to write in English as clearly and smoothly as possible for their level. Candidates will be given a topic together with instructions on what they need to write.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- **TASK** – Is the candidate able to follow the instructions?
- **SPELLING** – Is the candidate able to avoid unnecessary spelling mistakes?
- **VOCABULARY** – Is the candidate able to use the right words to express an idea in the correct context?
- **GRAMMAR** – Is the candidate able to use a variety of structures to express their ideas?
- **PUNCTUATION** – Is the candidate able to use the correct punctuation at all times?
- **MEANING** – Does the combination of all of the above create passages that make sense?

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

Make sure that your candidates:

- Try writing in English as much as possible. Practise written exercises with them in class. Outside of the classroom they can try writing messages or e-mails to their friends and ask them to reply to them
- Practise writing texts the same length as it is required for their level, with the same time constraints. They can get a teacher to mark their writing according to the Oxford TCC marking criteria afterwards
- Find model answers on the internet for writing pieces at their level, to see how answers should be structured and what kind of vocabulary / grammar structures would be required of them
- Don't use words from the question when answering it – try to use their own words as much as possible in order to prove they can produce written language and not just copy it
- Read the task carefully and plan an answer that addresses precisely what is required before they start writing
- Structure their writing logically and clearly
- Allow time to check through what they have written before submitting the section



05.

SPEAKING

The speaking part of the Oxford TCC tests the candidates' ability to speak English. This part is either conducted face-to-face or online. The candidates will be assessed by two qualified examiners. The reason for having two examiners is that they will provide two independent assessments of the candidates' English level. One of the examiners – the interlocutor – will conduct the examination, whereas the second one will focus only on listening to and assessing the candidate's English level, without taking part in the interaction. For level A1, candidates will be assessed individually, whereas for level A2 and above the candidates will be assessed in pairs.

STRUCTURE

- **Part 1:** the examiner will ask questions regarding the candidate's identity, as well as familiar or general topics (e.g. family, school, hobbies etc.)
- **Parts 2 – 3:** the candidate will have to interact with the examiner and / or with the other candidate taking the test at the same time, talking about topics provided by the examiner or analysing the content of certain pictures given to them

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

Make sure that your candidates:

- Can spell their name correctly
- Take every opportunity in preparation for the exam to speak English – regardless whether it is with friends, teachers etc.
- Develop their speaking skills by practising in class, simulating the oral examination
- Practise what they have to do in the speaking examination. For example, they can try looking at pictures with a friend and ask each other questions about it, or look at a picture by themselves and try to talk about it for as long as they can
- Know that it is their English level that is tested in the exam, and not their personal opinion
- Are as relaxed as possible before and during the examination
- Know that they have to listen carefully to the examiner's instructions and answer as fully and clearly as possible
- Focus on the task given by the examiner and provide answers based on that
- Ask the examiner to repeat the instructions if they don't understand them (they will not be penalised for this)
- Speak loudly enough so that the examiners are able to hear them clearly
- Don't panic if they forget a particular word – they should keep going and improvise or move on completely
- Listen to what their partner is saying during the examination when they are supposed to interact with each other. They should try to respond to the comments that their partner makes to show understanding and speaker/listener etiquette (extremely important at higher levels)
- Don't allow themselves or their partner to dominate the conversation, take the initiative but also allow their partner turns to speak
- Are aware that they are only allowed to speak English during the examination (doing otherwise will lead to penalties)
- Are aware that they are not allowed to help their partner when it is not their turn to speak



GENERAL TIPS FOR TEACHERS AND CANDIDATES

CANDIDATE PREPARATION

- Explain to your candidates the three stages of the exam
- Ask them to follow instructions
- Prepare a list of the most common written instructions used in the exam
- Have candidates work with these instructions in class exercises
- Practice timed exercises in class, on all sections of the examination
- After the diagnostic exam, have a feedback session to find out the candidates' experiences and doubts, and make sure to work with them to strengthen their weaknesses for the next stages of the certification
- Inform them of what they will be tested on and encourage them to prepare thoroughly, using the information relevant for their level



EXAM CHECKLIST FOR CANDIDATE

- Bring your ID with you
- Hand in your phone to your teacher before entering the exam (cell phones are not allowed!)
- Check your computer
- Plan your time
- Keep an eye on the clock
- Don't leave the test page
- Don't forget to check the instructions
- Verify if the internet connection is working well
- Do not forget to bring your earphones
- Take your time to read the instructions carefully
- Check your answer before you submit it
- It is very important to click on SUBMIT when you finish your test

BEFORE THE TEST

- Make sure that your candidates are used to working with computers
- Check that your candidates' names are correct
- Verify that the e-mail is in use
- Print the information (name, password, code, e-mail) and give it to the candidates on the day of the test

DURING THE TEST

- Make sure the candidates have access to a stable Internet connection
- Ensure the candidates have an appropriate level of supervision, to ensure that no plagiarism occurs (NB if we were to encounter a case of plagiarism, this will result in penalties and disqualification)
- It is important not to panic, you or your candidates
 - if there is a problem during the test, have the cell phone number of the Oxford Education Operations department at hand, and they will be able to help you

AFTER THE TEST

- Once all of the exams are finished and marked Oxford Education will e-mail you the grades of each of your candidates and their scores in all of the skills tested. This will help you know what you need to work on to support your candidates and strengthen their weaknesses
- Within a few weeks you will receive in your institution the Oxford TCC certificates (one week to receive the results of the diagnostic and mock tests and three weeks for the certification test) ¹

¹ The above mentioned period starts from the day that your last candidate has finished their examination.

THE OXFORD TCC - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How are the five skills tested in the Oxford TCC weighed against the final score?

Diagnostic: 20% Use of English, 25% Listening, 25% Reading, 30% Writing

Mock: 30% Use of English, 35% Listening, 35% Reading

Certificate: 20% Use of English, 20% Listening, 20% Reading, 20% Writing, 20% Speaking

2. What is the suggested timeline for candidates undertaking the three stages of the Oxford TCC?

Diagnostic: September; **Mock:** January;

Certificate: March-June

3. Do you have any reasonable adjustments for test takers with disabilities?

We can provide adjustments such as extra time and supervised breaks during the test for test takers with disabilities. It is imperative that you contact our team beforehand if one of your candidates has any disability that might impact their test results and we should be aware of.

4. A candidate didn't perform to the best of his / her abilities in the diagnostic/mock test. Is it possible for them to take the certification exam at a higher level?

Yes. If you have a valid reason to believe that your candidate's level of English is higher than what the diagnostic/mock results suggest, you can choose to select a different level for your candidate to take his / her certificate in. However, keep in mind that this decision is your own and if the candidate does not attain the level you request they will not be able to retake the test until next time.

5. What happens if my candidate is absent on the day of the exam?

If they are absent for a medical reason, they need to provide a doctor's note showing the reason for their absence. In that case, the test can be rescheduled. In any other case, the candidates cannot retake the exam on another day.

6. What happens if my candidate becomes ill during the exam?

You need to call our operations team immediately to notify us of what has happened and see if we can reschedule the exam for another day.

7. Do my candidates need to have a partner for their speaking test?

Yes, for A2 level and above, all candidates need to have a partner at the same level. If you do not have an even number of candidates at a certain level taking the exam (e.g. only 5 candidates taking the B1 exam), the examiner will act as the last candidate's partner for the purposes of the exam.

8. What happens if I need to reschedule the exam for my candidates?

Call our Operations team to discuss the issue.

9. Who should supervise the computer-based test?

At least one teacher who is not their regular teacher has to be in the same room when candidates are undertaking the computer-based test, in order to make sure they are appropriately supervised. Teachers are not allowed to help candidates in any way, unless it is a technical problem.

The timeline is flexible, depending on the requirements of the testing centre. Contact our Operations team for more details.

10. Who can be in the same room as the candidates taking the speaking test?

While candidates are examined face-to-face, the only other people in the room are the examiners. If the speaking tests are carried out online, the candidates will have to be alone with the computer in the room - no teachers, adults or other candidates are allowed to be present during the examination.

11. What happens if the Internet connection goes down during the test?

Our platform has been upgraded to allow for the answers that the candidates give to be automatically saved in case this happens. The candidates will need to finish the test and then send us their answers as soon as they can go back online.

12. Can candidates receive a certificate for a higher level if they excelled in the level they were tested for?

No, the candidates will receive the certificate at the level that they took the test, as each test is only created / marked based on the criteria for that particular level, and not for the level above.

13. What do I need to take the exam?

You would need a personal computer or a tablet (mobile phones are not accepted), Ethernet connection, the latest version of Google Chrome, Firefox or Safari (Internet Explorer is not accepted), as well as headphones. You need to make sure to disable your computer's firewall before you start the examination, or else you might encounter technical difficulties.





Oxford Education Academic Department
academic@oxfordeducationlit.org

Oxford Education Commercial Department
sales@oxfordeducationlit.org

THE OXFORD TCC
OFFICIAL GUIDELINES