telc
LANGUAGE TESTS

TEST SPECIFICATIONS
ENGLISH BUSINESS

B2·C1

Contents

1 Background Information

1.1 Dual-Level Examinations

In order to assess language skills reliably over two CEFR levels, the test development team defined two cut-off scores, instead of the one cut-off score typical for single-level examinations. For the examination *telc B2·C1 Business,* this means that we can determine accurately whether the candidate's test results are sufficient for a B2 level assessment and, if so, whether they are also sufficient for a C1 level assessment.

telc's aims when developing this test were to

- provide successful candidates with a valid certificate either at level B2 or at level C1,

- achieve this objective within a manageable time frame for the actual examination; i. e., with as few test items as possible,

- give all candidates a profile of their abilities as well as certifying the overall level achieved.

In order to fulfil the second aim, the subtests Listening, Reading and Language Elements are counted together for the final result of the test. Thus 70 items can be taken into account when determining whether a test taker has reached level B2 or C1 for the receptive skills. Each subtest seen by itself would not provide the necessary amount of information about the test taker's ability. Therefore, if the results for Listening, Reading and Language Elements were to be reported separately, these subtests would have to include many more items. Considerations of time versus cost as well as practicability led to the decision to combine the three subtests. The productive skills Writing and Speaking are, however, assessed independently.

This means that *telc English B2·C1 Business* has three parts which are evaluated separately:

- Listening/Reading/Language Elements

- Writing

- Speaking

The level achieved for each of these parts can be either "C1", "B2" or "below B2". The methods used for this evaluation are explained below.

The B2·C1 test cannot measure a candidate's ability below the CEFR level B2, so a result of this nature is referred to as being "below B2".

Listening/Reading/Language Elements

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

- 50–70 points: C1

- 32–49 points: B2

- 0–31 points: below B2

Test analysis

13. You collect and analyse data on an adequate and representative sample of candidates and can be confident that their achievement is a result of the skills measured in the examination and not influenced by factors like L1, country of origin, gender, age and ethnic origin.

14. Item-level data (e. g. for computing the difficulty, discrimination, reliability and standard errors of measurement of the examination) is collected from an adequate sample of candidates and analysed.

Communication with stakeholders

15. The examination administration system communicates the results of the examinations to candidates and to examination centres (e. g. schools) promptly and clearly.

16. You provide information to stakeholders on the appropriate context, purpose and use of the examination, on its content, and on the overall reliability of the results of the examination.

17. You provide suitable information to stakeholders to help them interpret results and use them appropriately.

1.4 Relevant CEFR Scales

The CEFR provides essential information about the skills needed to successfully complete the examination *telc English B2·C1 Business.* The scales in the following chart and the descriptors they include are incorporated into the examination, although the amount and intensity of their use varies. Since the examination covers two levels of competence, the descriptors for both levels B2 and C1 have been listed below. CEFR descriptors which are not relevant for this examination have been omitted.

GLOBAL SCALE

Proficient User	**C1**	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	**B2**	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

LISTENING

	OVERALL LISTENING COMPREHENSION
C1	Can understand enough to follow extended speech on abstract and complex topics beyond his/her own field, though he/she may need to confirm occasional details, especially if the accent is unfamiliar. Can recognise a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, appreciating register shifts. Can follow extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly.
B2	Can understand standard spoken language, live or broadcast, on both familiar and unfamiliar topics normally encountered in personal, social, academic or vocational life. Only extreme background noise, inadequate discourse structure and/or idiomatic usage influence the ability to understand. Can understand the main ideas of propositionally and linguistically complex speech on both concrete and abstract topics delivered in a standard dialect, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can follow extended speech and complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar, and the direction of the talk is sign-posted by explicit markers.

	UNDERSTANDING INTERACTION BETWEEN NATIVE SPEAKERS
C1	Can easily follow complex interactions between third parties in group discussion and debate, even on abstract, complex unfamiliar topics.
B2	Can keep up with an animated conversation between native speakers. Can with some effort catch much of what is said around him/her, but may find it difficult to participate effectively in discussion with several native speakers who do not modify their language in any way.

	LISTENING AS A MEMBER OF A LIVE AUDIENCE
C1	Can follow most lectures, discussions and debates with relative ease.
B2	Can follow the essentials of lectures, talks and reports and other forms of academic/professional presentation which are propositionally and linguistically complex.

	LISTENING TO ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS
C1	Can extract specific information from poor quality, audibly distorted public announcements e.g. in a station, sports stadium etc. Can understand complex technical information, such as operating instructions, specifications for familiar products and services.
B2	Can understand announcements and messages on concrete and abstract topics spoken in standard dialect at normal speed.

2 Test Specifications

2.1 The Structure of the Examination

	Subtest	Aim	Type of Test	Time
Written Examination	**Listening**			
	Part 1	Understanding everyday conversations	4 true/false and 2 multiple-choice items	40 min.
	Part 2	Understanding a lecture	8 multiple-choice items	
	Part 3	Understanding different opinions about a topic	5 matching items	
	Part 4	Understanding a discussion	6 true/false items	
	Reading			
	Part 1	Understanding questions and answers from an Internet forum	6 matching items	50 min.
	Part 2	Understanding a lengthy, informative text	11 multiple-choice items	
	Part 3	Understanding a formal text	4 multiple-choice and 4 true/false items	
	Language Elements			
	Part 1	Selecting appropriate phrases in a conversation	10 matching items	20 min.
	Part 2	Selecting appropriate phrases in a semi-formal letter or email	10 multiple-choice items	
	Break			20 min.
	Writing			
		Writing an argumentative text	1 writing task out of a choice of two	60 min.
Oral Examination	**Speaking**			
	Part 1	Small talk	Task sheet with topic and picture	
	Part 2A	Presentation	Oral presentation which should be prepared at home	20 min.
	Part 2B	Answering follow-up questions	Questions from the examiner and the other candidate	
	Part 3	Discussion	Task sheet with sample statements on one controversial topic	

2.3 Listening

Listening, Part 1

In the first part of this subtest, the candidates will demonstrate their ability to use their knowledge of various linguistic registers to grasp the essence of a conversation and to pick out important details of the conversation. The situation is usually a short exchange between two people who work for the same company (e.g. employee and supervisor, two colleagues) or external business partners (e.g. customer and supplier).

Structure	Instructions Audio texts Items
Objective	To assess the candidate's ability to understand the gist of conversations and certain specific details and identify the register
Intended operations	Listening to identify the relationship between the speakers, listening for gist and listening for detail
Type of task	Four true/false items and two multiple-choice items with three options, listed in alphabetical order
Number of items	Six (items 1–6)
Channel	Text: spoken Instructions and items: written
Type of text	Dialogue: conversations in typical work-related situations. One conversation is formal, one informal.
Nature of information	The conversations can take place between two people meeting in person or talking to each other on the telephone.
Speakers	Number of speakers: two per conversation
Test items	▪ The candidate will hear two recorded conversations. ▪ Each conversation is played once. ▪ For each conversation there are two true/false statements and one multiple-choice question. The task is to decide whether the statements for each conversation are true or false according to what is said and also to choose the correct answer from three options. Only one option is correct.
Topics	The topics are related to typical situations at the workplace.
Level	The vocabulary and grammar in the texts may range between levels B2 and C1. The language of the items is at level B2.
Weighting	One point per item (0 for incorrect response)

TEST SPECIFICATIONS

ENGLISH B2·C1 BUSINESS

telc English B2·C1 Business is a standardised dual-level examination intended for adult learners. It measures language competence across two levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)* using a task-based, communicative approach.

The *telc English B2·C1 Business Test Specifications* are designed for teachers, examiners, and other ELT professionals who wish to gain a deeper understanding of how the examination was constructed, how the individual tasks work and how the candidates' performances are assessed.

For additional information regarding the *telc English B2·C1 Business* examination (including sample tasks), please refer to the *telc English B2·C1 Business* mock examination.