

Syllabus & Examination Specification Classic A2

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The examination specification for each level provides teachers, Candidates, and other stakeholders with comprehensive information about the content of the examinations.

Overview of the Topics Used Across the Levels

Topic	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
Personal Details						
Family & Friends						
Hobbies & Leisure Activities						
Holidays						
Transport						
Weather						
Shopping						
Health & Exercise						
Education						
Work, Jobs & Careers						
Films, Media & Entertainment						
Books and Literature						
News, Lifestyles & Culture						
Environment						
Technology & Science						
Community and Society						
Law and Order						
Abstract topics						

At each level, the following information is provided:

- **Examinations Overview:** details of each examination’s structure, how individual skills are examined, the types of tasks the examinations consist of and how long the examinations take to complete.
- **Text Types:** details of the general text types that Candidates are expected to be familiar with and may find in their examination.
- **Language Specification:** details of the functions, grammar, discourse markers and topics that Candidates are expected to be familiar with and use and which may form part of the examination.
- **Communicative Functions and Notions:** details of the kinds of functions that Candidates are expected to be familiar with and able to perform and which may be part of the examination.

- **Key Language Items:** Further details of elements of language Candidates are expected to be familiar with and use, and which may be part of the examination.
- **Candidate Skills, Knowledge and Understanding:** the criteria against which Candidates will be assessed.
- **Examination Specification:** the breakdown of each task within each individual examination.

GA Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Classic A2)

Examinations Overview

The GA Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (A2) consists of four examinations:

Examination	No. of Tasks	Task 1 Type	Task 2 Type	Task 3 Type	Task 4 Type	Time Allowed
Speaking	4	Personal Information	Talking about the prepared topic	Short role plays	Conversation	Up to 15 minutes per 2 Candidates
Listening	4	6 x select the most appropriate response (ABC multiple choice)	4 x multiple choice questions (ABC) one per short conversations	6 x multiple choice questions (ABC) About a conversation	6 x true/false questions short monologue	Approx. 20 minutes
Reading	4	6 x multiple choice (ABC gap fill)	6 x multiple choice questions (ABC)	6 x multiple choice (ABC gap fill)	6 x matching statements to three texts	30 minutes
Writing	3	Candidate completes a form / short questionnaire	Candidate writes a short text in response to a prompt (minimum 60 words)	Candidate chooses one topic (of 2) to write about (minimum 60 words)	N/A	30 minutes

A2 Text Types

At level A2, Candidates will encounter topics which are both familiar and relevant to them as learners of English. These will include:

- Family Life
- Hobbies and Pastimes
- Personal details / experiences
- Holidays
- Leisure Activities
- Shopping
- Work and Jobs
- Health
- Education and Training
- Services
- Weather
- Transport

At this level, Candidates are expected to read and understand short texts with repeated language patterns on these familiar topics, reading and obtaining information from common signs and symbols in texts such as:

- Public signs and notices
- Lists
- Simple forms
- Notes
- Records
- Emails
- Letters
- Diagrams
- Simple narratives

The words Candidates need to read will depend on their reasons for reading, e.g. employment, college course, childcare, enjoyment. The following are examples of words a Candidate would typically be expected to be able to read at this level:

High-Frequency Words

thing, could, will, was, were, tell, wish, time, soon, saw, think, said, her, his, our, their, that, what, gave, went, black, white, after, before, because, under, over, here, once, him, who, where, how

At this level, Candidates are expected to write to communicate information with some awareness of the intended audience in documents such as:

- Forms
- Lists
- Messages
- Notes
- Records
- Emails
- Simple narratives

Spelling

It is important for adult ESOL learners to be able to recognise the sound–symbol relationship and common letter patterns in words that are of real interest to them as individuals, working from a context. The order in which these sounds and patterns will be taught will depend on the words learners want and need to write. Learners whose first language does not have the same phonemes as English will have difficulty in recognising the sound and therefore the associated symbol.

Phonics

At this level, learners should recognise and use a wider range of phonics:

- Initial common clusters: bl (black), br (brown), cl (close), cr (cream), dr (drink), fl (fly), fr (friend), gl (glass), gr (grill), pl (place), pr (Prime Minister), scr (scream), sk (skin), sl (sleep), sm (smile), sp (spell), squ (squash), st (stop), str (street), tr (train), tw (twins), thr (through)
- Common final clusters: ct (fact), ft (lift), ld (build), lt (melt), nch (lunch), lth (health), nd (second), nt (sent), lk (milk), lp (help), mp (lamp), nk (think), rd (heard), sk (task), sp (crisp), st (first) xt (next)
- Vowel digraphs: ee (feet), ea (seat), oo (moon), u–e (tune), ew (flew), ue (blue)
- Diphthongs: ie (lie), ai (train), a–e (name), ay (play), i–e (bite), igh (high), y (fly), ow (cow), ou (sound)

Word Structure

At this level, learners should recognise and use:

- Letter patterns common in English, e.g.: tion (station)
- Silent letters, e.g. *lght* (*light*), *wr* (*write*), *ould* (*could*), *lk* (*talk*)
- Prefixes and suffixes, e.g. *Un* (*unhappy*), *re* (*return*), *less* (*helpless*)
- Structural endings, e.g. *Plural s*, *ed* (*walked*), *ing* (*cooking*)

A2 Language Specification

Functions	Grammar	Discourse markers	Topics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking for and giving directions • Giving personal information • Giving and obtaining simple information • Greetings & farewells • Introductions • Giving thanks • Telling the time • Understanding and using numbers • Understanding and using prices • Describing habits and routines • Describing past experiences • Describing people • Describing places • Describing things • Expressing obligation and necessity • Expressing feelings in simple terms • Making and responding to requests • Making and responding to suggestions • Agreeing and disagreeing 	<p style="text-align: center;">A1 +</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjectives – comparative – use of than and definite article • Adjectives – superlative – use of definite article • Adverbial phrases of time, place and frequency – including word order • Adverbs of frequency • Articles – with countable and uncountable nouns • Countable and Uncountable; much/many • Future Time (will and going to) • Gerunds • Going to • Imperatives • Modals – can/could • Modals – have to • Modals – should • Past Continuous • Past Simple • Phrasal verbs – common • Possessives – use of ‘s; s’ • Prepositional phrases (place, time and movement) • Prepositions of time: on/in/at • Present Continuous • Present Continuous for future • Present perfect • Questions • Verb + ing/infinitive: like/want-would like • Wh-questions in past • Zero and 1st Conditional 	<p style="text-align: center;">A1+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkers: sequential – past time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clothes • Daily life • Entertainment and media • Health, medicine and exercise • Language • People • Personal feelings, opinions and experiences • Personal identification • Places and buildings • School and study • Services • Shopping • Social interaction • Sport • Transport • Travel and holidays • Weather • Work and jobs

A2 Communicative Functions & Notions

- Greet
- Respond to greetings
- Take leave
- Give personal information
- Ask for personal details
- Describe self and others
- Ask for descriptions of people
- Describe places and things
- Ask for descriptions of places and things
- Compare people, places, things
- Make comparative questions
- Describe daily routines and regular activities
- Ask about regular or daily routines
- Narrate—talk about past events (1st person narrative)
- Narrate—talk about past events (3rd person narrative)
- Ask about past events
- Talk about future plans, arrangements and intentions
- Ask about future plans and intentions
- Express need
- Make requests—ask for something face-to-face or on the telephone
- Respond to formal and informal requests for something
- Make requests—ask someone to do something in formal and informal situations
- Respond to formal and informal requests to do something
- Make requests—ask for directions
- Respond to requests for directions
- Make requests—ask for permission formally
- Respond to formal requests for permission
- Ask about people’s feelings, opinions, interests, wishes, hopes
- Respond to questions about preference
- Ask for clarification and explanation
- Respond to requests for clarification
- Respond to requests for explanations
- Respond for requests for directions
- Check back
- Express likes and dislikes with reasons, and cause and effect
- Express views, with reasons, and cause and effect
- Express wishes and hopes
- Apologise, and give reason
- Express thanks gratefully
- Give warnings
- Express possession
- Ask about possession
- Offer

- Insist politely
- Persuade

A2 Key Language Items

Simple & compound sentences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word order in compound sentences, e.g.: subject – verb – (object) + and/but + subject – verb – (object) • There was/were/there is going to be • Clauses joined with conjunctions and/but/or • A limited range of common verbs + –ing form • Verb + infinitive with and without to • Wh– questions • Comparative questions • Alternative questions • Question words when, what time, how often, why, • How and expressions
Noun phrase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countable and uncountable nouns • Simple noun phrases • Object and reflexive pronouns • Determiners of quantity – any, many • Use of articles including: definite article and zero article with uncountable nouns; definite article with superlatives • Possessive s and possessive pronouns
Verb forms and time markers in statements, interrogatives, negatives and short forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple present tense of: regular transitive and intransitive verbs • With frequency adverbs and phrases • Simple past tense of regular and common irregular verbs with time markers such as ago • Future time using: present continuous; use of time markers modals and forms with similar meaning: must to express obligation; mustn't to express prohibition; have to, had to; express need; could to make requests; couldn't to express impossibility • Use of simple modal adverbs: possibly, probably, perhaps • Very common phrasal verbs
Adjectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjectives and adjective word order • Comparatives, regular and common irregular forms
Adverbs and prepositional phrases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepositions and prepositional phrases of place and time • Adverbs and simple adverbial phrases including: sequencing: (<i>after that</i>); of time and place (in the morning, at the bus stop); of frequency: (<i>always, sometimes</i>); of manner (<i>carefully, quickly</i>) • Word order with adverbs and adverbial phrases • Use of intensifiers, e.g. <i>Really, quite, so</i>
Discourse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverbs to indicate sequence – first, finally • Use of substitution markers to structure spoken discourse

Examination Specification: A2

Overview of the A2 Speaking Examination

The total guide time for the Speaking examination is up to 15 minutes, including an introduction read by the Interlocutor. There are 4 tasks in total.

The Speaking examination takes place with two Candidates and the Interlocutor present.

Successful A2 Candidates will demonstrate the following competencies across the examination:

- understand a native speaker interlocutor speaking clearly and slowly about familiar matters
- understand and extract the main point and essential information from short speech
- participate in short conversations on topics of interest
- discuss everyday practical issues in a simple way
- participate in a simple, direct exchange of information, including asking and answering straightforward questions
- describe people, places, events, activities and experiences in simple terms
- use some simple structures correctly
- use sufficient vocabulary to conduct routine, every day transactions involving familiar situations and topics
- pronounce language in manner which is clear and generally understood

Candidates' performance is assessed in two categories:

1) Task Achievement – in other words, how well they used the language to respond to each task.

The maximum number of marks that can be achieved in this category is 12.

2) Overall Linguistic Competency – in other words, how well they use vocabulary, grammar, phonological control and fluency in their response to each task.

The maximum number of marks that can be achieved in this category is 12.

Content of the A2 Speaking Examination

A2 Speaking Examination (total time: up to 15 minutes)		
Task	Summary	Approx. Timings
Task 1: Personal Questions	Each Candidate answers a number of simple questions about their personal life, preferences, habits, routines and activities using one or two full sentences.	3 minutes for two Candidates
Task 2: Talking about the prepared topic	<p>The topics are published in advance to allow Candidates to prepare for this task.</p> <p>In turn, each Candidate talks about their topic for up to one minute. Candidates must ask and answer one question from each other. The Candidates must also answer a question from the Interlocutor.</p> <p>Example topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My English class • Where I live • My hobby 	4 minutes for two Candidates
Task 3: Short role-plays	<p>The Candidates are presented with two role-play scenarios each. They must initiate one role-play and respond to the interlocutor's introduction in the second. Candidates are expected to take two or three turns in each role-play.</p> <p>Example role play scenarios:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>(Interlocutor starts):</i> it's Tom's birthday next week. What present should we get him? • You arrived late for lunch. Explain what happened. <i>(Candidate starts)</i> 	3 minutes for two Candidates
Task 4: Conversation	<p>The Candidates take part in a three-way conversation, led by the interlocutor.</p> <p>Visual prompts are provided.</p> <p>Example conversation starter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like to go shopping. How about you? 	3 minutes for two Candidates

Overview of the A2 Listening Examination

The approximate time allowed for the Listening examination is 20 minutes. There are 4 tasks in total.

The Listening examination is completed under the supervision of an Invigilator, under controlled examination conditions. The Examination may be conducted with one or multiple Candidates at the same time.

Successful A2 Candidates will demonstrate the following competencies across the examination:

- Can generally identify the topic of discussion if it's conducted slowly and clearly
- Can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements
- Can understand simple directions
- Can understand essential information about predictable everyday matters
- Can identify the main point of TV news items

Candidates' performance in this examination is assessed based on the number of correct answers they chose in each task. All of the questions across the assessment tasks are equally weighted.

Content of the A2 Listening Examination

A2 Listening Examination (approx. time 20 minutes)		
Task	Summary	Marks Available
Task 1: Responding to questions	The Candidates listen to six questions or statements and select the most appropriate response from a choice of three options ABC.	6
Task 2: Short conversations.	The Candidates listen to four short conversations, and answer one multiple choice ABC question about each conversation.	4
Task 3: Longer conversation.	The Candidates listen to a longer conversation between two speakers and answer six multiple choice ABC questions about it.	6
Task 4: Short monologue.	The candidates listen to a short monologue and decide whether six statements about it are true or false.	6
Total Marks Available in the Reading Examination: 22		

Overview of the A2 Reading Examination

The total time allowed for the Reading examination is 30 minutes. There are 4 tasks in total.

The Reading examination is completed under the supervision of an Invigilator, under controlled examination conditions. The Examination may be conducted with one or multiple Candidates at the same time.

Successful A2 Candidates will demonstrate the following competencies across the examination:

- understand everyday signs and notices in public places and in workplaces, including regulations and instructions
- understand short, simple letters (short and simple informal letters or basic formal letters) or simple articles
- identify specific information in simple written everyday material

Candidates' performance in this examination is assessed based on the number of correct answers they chose in each task. All of the questions across the assessment tasks are equally weighted.

Content of the A2 Reading Examination

A2 Reading Examination (time allowed: 30 minutes)		
Task	Summary	Marks Available
Task 1: Gap fill - sentences	The Candidates read 6 sentences, and choose the most suitable word to complete the gap in each sentence from a choice of three	6
Task 2: Multiple choice - short text	The Candidates read a continuous text, and answer 6 multiple choice ABC questions based on the content of the text.	6
Task 3: Gap fill - short text	The Candidates read a continuous text which contains 6 gaps, and choose the most suitable word to complete the text from a choice of three options.	6
Task 4: True false - three short texts	The Candidates read three separate texts on the same topic and match 8 statements or questions to the most appropriate text.	6
Total Marks Available in the Reading Examination: 24		

Overview of the A2 Writing Examination

The total time allowed for the Writing examination is 30 minutes. There are 3 tasks in total.

The Writing examination is completed under the supervision of an Invigilator, under controlled examination conditions. The Examination may be conducted with one or multiple Candidates at the same time.

Successful A2 Candidates will demonstrate the following competencies across the examination:

- write a series of simple phrases and sentences about their family, home, educational background, job.
- write short, basic descriptions of people, events, past activities and personal experiences in linked sentences
- write very simple personal letters, notes and messages
- use simple grammatical structures correctly
- have sufficient range and control of vocabulary to deal with routine, everyday situations involving familiar subjects and topics
- write text in complete sentences, organise it appropriately for the text and use mostly correct punctuation.

Candidates' performance is assessed across three categories:

1) Recording Information – in Task 1, one mark is allocated for every appropriate answer. Candidates are not penalised for spelling mistakes unless the error detracts from the message. The maximum number of marks that can be achieved in this category is 8 marks.

2) Task Achievement – Tasks 2 and 3 only - marks are allocated according to how well the Candidate addresses the objective of each task. The maximum number of marks that can be achieved in this category is 8.

3) Overall Linguistic Competency – in Tasks 2 and 3 only, marks are allocated according to how well they use vocabulary, grammar, structure, punctuation, spelling and legibility in their response to each task. The maximum number of marks that can be achieved in this category is 16.

Content of the A2 Writing Examination

A2 Writing Examination (time allowed: 30 minutes)	
Task	Summary
Task 1: Simple form	<p>Candidates are required to complete a form or a questionnaire.</p> <p>The Candidate is expected to produce a series of simple sentences in response to a number of questions relating to everyday aspects of their lives, such as family, living conditions, educational background, previous or most recent job etc.</p>
Task 2: Short text	<p>Candidates are required to write a short response to an email or letter received. The response will be of mostly descriptive content, and relate to every day aspects of the Candidate's life.</p> <p>The main purpose of this task is to assess the Candidate's ability to write a short message which covers all required points.</p> <p>Word Count: The Candidate is expected to produce a minimum of 60 words.</p>
Task 3: Short text	<p>Candidates are given a choice of two different options in this task.</p> <p>The Candidate is required to write a very simple personal note or letter. The Candidate is expected to convey some of the following language functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • express thanks • express apology • provide a brief description • make or respond to invitations • make or respond to suggestions <p>Word Count: The Candidate is expected to produce a minimum of 60 words.</p>