

EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM FOR THE CERTIFICATE OF ATTAINMENT IN MODERN LANGUAGES



EXAM REGULATIONS¹

International ECL Examination Centre

UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS

Foreign Language Centre

H-7624 Pécs, Damjanich St. 30.

e-mail: ecl.international@eclexam.eu website: <https://eclexam.eu/>

© All rights reserved

® European Consortium for the Certificate of Attainment in Modern Languages

¹ Examination regulations are valid in all examination countries with the exception of Hungary, where country-specific regulations apply.

Features of the ECL Examination

The ECL language examination is administered by the Foreign Language Centre (Idegen Nyelvi Központ) of the University of Pécs, Hungary (Pécsi Tudományegyetem). The examination is paper-based and measures general foreign language proficiency, focusing on testing candidates' communicative language knowledge.

Languages

The ECL examination system has 15 examination languages: Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, English, French, German, Hebrew, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovak and Spanish.

Levels

The ECL language examination is aligned to the levels of the Common European Framework. The ECL language exam has the following levels: A2 (beginner), B1 (elementary), B2 (intermediate) and C1 (advanced).

Parts of the Exam

It is possible to take a complex exam or a partial exam (either written or oral) at the examination sites. The complex ECL language exam has four parts: reading comprehension, written communication, listening comprehension and oral communication. The written part includes the reading comprehension and the written communication sections, and the oral part includes the listening comprehension and oral communication sections.

Examination Periods

The Examination Centre (hereinafter the Examination Centre) has five examination periods annually. The exam dates of each language are available on the official ECL Examination Centre website (<https://eclexam.eu/>).

Examination Sites

ECL language exams can be taken at examination sites that belong to the ECL examination site network in Hungary or abroad. Candidates can get information about the possible examination sites on the website.

Application

Individuals turning 14 during the year they plan to take the ECL language exam may register. An online registration form must be completed to apply for the exam on the ECL website. Applicants can register online three weeks before the application deadline.

Proof of payment of the exam fee has to be sent to the exam site by e-mail. The application is not valid without this documentation. The deadline of the application closes four weeks before the scheduled exam date. A confirmation e-mail about the application and information regarding the payment of the examination fees is sent to each applicant using the e-mail address provided.

The online application form must be submitted with the same information that is on the candidate's passport. In case of a change in the name, address or any personal data, the

candidate needs to inform the examination site in writing (electronically) as soon as possible so the changes can be put in the database. If this is not completed, the certificate will have incorrect data. The fee for reprinting the certificate will be charged to the candidate.

Registering for Exams in Multiple Languages and Levels

The ECL examination system allows candidates to apply to take exams at different languages and levels in the same examination period. However, candidates cannot apply to different languages at the same level for administrative reasons.

Late Registration

Candidates may apply (for an extra fee) after the deadline of the application. The deadline for late registration is announced by the Examination Centre via e-mail to the examination sites.

Examination Fee

Examination fees are established by ECL examination sites individually. Therefore, candidates must inquire current examination fees at their local examination sites in their respective countries.

Payment of Exam Fees

Once the exam fee has been paid the candidate has the right to take the exam or postpone the exam for the next exam period. To postpone an exam, an application must be completed and an extra fee has to be paid.

The payment of the exam may vary according to examination sites. For an online application, candidates receive information about possible payment methods. The exam fee may be directly paid to the provided bank account or completed by bank transfer. The confirmation of the payment has to be submitted to the examination site in person or via e-mail.

Invoice

A request for issuing the invoice can be made at the time of registration at the examination site.

Returning the Exam Fee

The exam fee cannot be refunded. If the candidate does not appear for the exam, the exam fee will be lost if the candidate does not postpone the exam. Applying for a new exam is only possible by paying the exam fee again.

If the candidate cannot take the exam because of an emergency, the examination site may refund 40% of the exam fee after reviewing the candidate's written request and making a decision based on the circumstances. This request may be accepted only if it is received at least one day before the day of the exam. The fee for a postponed exam may not be refunded either.

Informing the Candidates about the Time and Location of the Exam

Candidates get informed about the time and location of their exams electronically 10 days before the exam. This information includes the candidate numbers, details about the location and time of each part of the exam, and other relevant info (e.g. rules, sanctions, devices allowed, etc.).

Examination of Candidates with Disabilities

The Examination Centre provides an appropriate testing environment for people with disabilities to ensure equal opportunity. People with disabilities who are in possession of the required medical documents are entitled to get specific testing accommodations.

Candidates with special educational needs may take the exam in the framework of a special arrangement provided they request it in writing at their respective examination site. The form for this process is available at the examination sites and also electronically on the website of the Examination Centre.

Medical documentation has to be attached to the application in all cases. In case of a late submission of a medical certificate, individual arrangements cannot be ensured. In this case, the candidate may postpone the examination to the next examination date without paying the examination fee again.

The Examination Centre decides whether testing accommodations will be provided on the basis of a candidate's medical certificate. No changes in the content of the examination material can be made, and only the format of examination material can be altered.

Postponing the Exam

Candidates may request to postpone an exam for a fee if they are unable to take it for justified reasons. Candidates may request postponement by sending a form to their local exam site. The exam can be postponed to the next exam date if it is accepted by the local exam site. A re-scheduled exam cannot be postponed again.

The request form is available on the website of the Examination Centre. When a candidate submits the Postponement Request form, the exam will NOT be automatically re-scheduled. Since it is a special procedure, candidates are asked to explain their reasons in detail AND present supporting documents (e.g. medical certificate, official declaration of an authority). Personal or family reasons may be accepted as well.

If the candidate applied for a complex exam, only the full exam can be postponed until the next exam date/session. If the candidate has registered for a partial exam (only written or oral exam), the partial examination can be postponed. Individual skills (Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking) cannot be postponed separately.

Changing the Site and Date of the Exam

The candidate may not change the examination site after the payment has been made and the application has been accepted. Under certain circumstances, the original examination site and the new examination site may agree about the change by the second day after the application deadline at the latest.

Changing the Language, Level or Type of an Exam

Upon written request, candidates can change the language, level or part of the exam they are taking if the payment of the exam fee has not been made. The candidate must inform the examination site about this request.

The Process of the Exam

The written parts of the exam (reading comprehension, written communication and listening comprehension) start at a unified time at all examination sites on the day the Examination Centre has established. For complex exams, the exam starts with the written parts (reading comprehension and written communication), and the listening comprehension is administered after a break.

The oral exam may be conducted on the same day or within two weeks of the reading, writing and listening sections for each exam period. The oral exam takes place based on a schedule set by the examination site.

The Oral Exam

The oral exam is conducted by two examiners. The oral exam may only be conducted by examiners who have completed the basic training and the regular professional development trainings for administering oral exams.

Candidates take the exam in pairs. Candidates have the opportunity to select partners for the oral communication exam during the online registration process. If they do not select a person, a partner for the oral exam will be assigned randomly. In the case of an odd number of candidates, the examination sites will assign candidates to groups of three. After the oral exam has begun, candidates do not receive time to prepare their answers before the dialogue and monologue tasks.

For quality control purposes, audio recordings of the oral exam are made. When signing the Application Form, candidates accept that their speaking exams will be recorded. The audio recordings are confidential, and only the Examination Centre may use them for purposes of quality assurance and research.

Conflict of Interest

When creating the Oral Communication examination boards and choosing the invigilators, the examination sites take into consideration any conflict of interest according to the law and the accreditation requirements.

Assistance and Correction of Mistakes

For the written communication exam, candidates at all levels may use printed monolingual and bilingual dictionaries that are available in bookstores. Thematic dictionaries cannot be used during the exam. Other assistance (e.g. handwritten notes, list of words) is not allowed.

Dictionaries or other types of assistance are not permitted during the reading comprehension, listening comprehension and oral communication sections.

Notes can only be taken in the test booklets. Correctors and pens with erasers are not allowed. Candidates can make corrections by crossing out their mistakes using a black or blue pen.

For the first task of the reading and listening comprehension sections, candidates have to mark their choices in the table on the answer sheet. Only clearly marked solutions will be accepted.

For listening and reading comprehension tasks with questions to answer based on what candidates have heard and read, short and precise answers should be given in a few words instead of using complete sentences. The answers should focus on the questions, and they should not include unnecessary information. If an answer includes details which are not part of the right answer, it is considered incorrect. For the reading tasks, answers that have been taken directly from the text and include unnecessary information will also be considered incorrect. Only answers in brackets or crossed out are not considered part of a candidate's final answer.

Only answers marked on the answer sheet can be evaluated. For tasks where the letter of the correct answer must be put in an answer grid, the correction can be done by crossing out a response and writing the final answer in the same box. Markers do not take into consideration any answers which are not placed in the answer grid.

Exam Safety Regulations

Only trained invigilators can conduct the written exams.

All candidates have to verify their identities with valid picture IDs (i.e. passport, driving license, identity card or residence permit). If a candidate cannot show any of these documents, the examination site must deny entry to the examination.

Candidates may not bring the following items into examination rooms: mobile phones, smart watches, earbuds, and any other electronic devices. Staff at local exam sites are permitted to use metal detectors when candidates enter examination rooms after presenting ID documentation to ensure that none of these devices are brought into exam sites. Additionally, other items such as bags, books, notebooks, and printed or handwritten materials are not permitted in exam rooms. During language exams, candidates are only allowed to write draft answers in the reading, writing, and listening test booklets. There is also a Notes page at the end of written communication section where candidates can write draft responses. Dictionaries may only be used for the writing test.

Final answers should be written in *black* or *blue* ink on the answer sheets.

No candidates may leave the examination room before finishing the written parts, except for health reasons or if they need to go to the restroom. In such cases, candidates may leave the examination room only when they are accompanied by a supervisor.

Candidates Arriving Late

If a candidate arrives when the instructions are being given during the reading comprehension and writing section, the candidate may enter the examination room, but no extra time can be provided for late arrivals. Candidates are not permitted to enter the examination room if they arrive during the listening comprehension section once the

recording has begun.

Disturbing Events

If the candidate wants to report any disturbing event during the exam, this has to be completed right after the section of the exam in question. The report has to be made in writing, and it has to be submitted to the head of the examination site or another representative immediately after the exam.

Internet Outage

The speaking exam is conducted using an online platform (PROEXAM). After logging in, examiners administer the entire exam on this platform, where the audio recording is made, and candidates' scores and any relevant comments are recorded.

The platform is internet-based; therefore, if the internet connection is interrupted or a general malfunction occurs and cannot be restored within one hour, the International ECL Examination Centre may, in consultation with the Examination Site, schedule a new date for the speaking exam. In the event of an internet connection failure, the International ECL Examination Centre may also authorize the Examination Site to proceed with the exam without using PROEXAM.

In such cases, the International ECL Examination Centre provides the oral exam materials in PPT format. Candidates draw a task number in the traditional manner, the exam is recorded using a voice recorder, and the examiners complete the evaluation sheets and attendance register manually. After the speaking exam, the scores given by the examiners are recorded by the Examination Site administrator in the administration software (LEO).

Cheating and Misbehaviour

In order to detect candidates attempting to take an exam under someone else's name, the ECL examination sites strictly check the identity of the candidates and also compare their ID cards with the names in their registrations. IDs must remain on the candidates' desks during the written exam and presented for security purposes when the answer sheets are collected.

In the event of a fraud (e.g. hired test taker), a report has to be made and the examination site informs the Examination Centre. All candidates involved will be disqualified from taking ECL exams in the future.

For verified cheating (copying someone else's test, using unpermitted tools, etc.), the candidate's exam will be invalidated, and the candidate may be disqualified from the possibility of taking future ECL language exams. If it is determined during the rating of the written exams that a candidate plagiarized from the internet or any other source, this is considered exam fraud; therefore, the Examination Centre will cancel the score received on this particular task.

Candidates are not allowed to pass information or material to one another during the exam. Candidates are not permitted to copy from one another or from anyone else, or to help one another in any way.

If any misconduct occurs, the invigilator must report the details to the head of the examination site and, if pertinent, may discontinue the exam of the candidate(s) involved.

This action is taken if the invigilator finds that disciplinary action is necessary for exam safety and to ensure an ideal environment for all other candidates completing the exam. A report must be made about the incident.

In accordance with the applicable guidelines for conducting examinations, the Examination Centre has the authority to cancel an examination if there are violations of these guidelines. In such cases, the results of the exam in question will be declared invalid and the participating candidates will not receive an evaluation. Furthermore, the Examination Centre reserves the right to exclude such candidates from participating in future examinations.

In situations where serious violations pose a significant threat to the fairness and equal treatment of all examination candidates, the Examination Centre may also decide to temporarily or permanently close the examination site in question.

If during the examination the local exam site jeopardises the security of the examination by deliberately causing an administrative error (e.g. by changing a name afterwards), the Examination Centre may unilaterally terminate the contract with immediate effect, without justification and without any procedure of proof.

If during the examination the safety of the examination is compromised due to the fault of the local exam site (e.g. inattention of the invigilator, irregularities in the conduct of the examination) or to the behaviour of candidates (e.g. communication between candidates, use of prohibited aids, attempt to photograph the examination material, removal of the tests from the examination room), the Examination Centre may suspend the operation of the Exam Site with immediate effect for a fixed or indefinite period. The suspension will take effect immediately, so if registration for the next examination is already in progress at the time of the suspension, it is the responsibility of the local exam site to notify registered candidates that the examination will be cancelled. The local exam site will be obliged to refund to the candidate the examination fee.

The conditions for lifting the suspension will be communicated to the local examination site by the Examination Centre after the case has been investigated. The Examination Centre has the right to terminate the contract after the case has been resolved.

In the event of the above points, the Examination Centre is under no obligation to the candidates to provide a makeup examination, and no new contract can be concluded between the partners.

If the International ECL Examination Centre becomes aware that a candidate presents a forged certificate to any official body, they will be excluded from registering for future ECL language examinations.

Confidentiality

All employees involved in conducting language exams sign a Declaration of Confidentiality agreement.

Copyright

Testing materials are under copyright. It is forbidden for the examination site or others to copy or photocopy blank or completed test papers and answer sheets.

Assessment and Calculation of Results

For each skill two assessors evaluate candidates' performance. A maximum of 25 points may be given for each skill. The reading and the listening comprehension tasks have 20 items each, and each item is worth 1.25 points. No partial points will be awarded for partially correct answers. For both the reading and listening comprehension tests there are two tasks for a total of 40 questions.

Analytical assessment scales with five criteria are used for the assessment of the written and oral communication tasks. The candidate can receive a maximum of 5 points for each criterion from each rater and for each task on the writing exam. The maximum score on the writing task is 100 points. On the basis of the two raters' points, the grading software uses the point average to decide the final points.

Two assessors individually grade candidate performance on the oral communication section. The two examiners reach a consensus with regards to the final score after the exam. The results of the listening and reading comprehension are analysed with the help of statistical methods at the Examination Centre. Corrections are made when the result of the statistical analysis mandates this process. During the correction, items that did not function well are neutralised and the points for those particular items are awarded to all candidates whether or not they provided the correct answers.

Reporting Results

Candidates will be informed about the exam results no later than the 30th day after the written exam.

International Certificates

Candidates may apply to take a complex exam or a partial exam (written or oral). Certificates are awarded to those candidates who are successful on a complex or partial exam.

The candidate is successful on an oral partial exam if he/she achieves at least 40% of the total score on both the listening comprehension test and the oral exam, and if the average of the two parts is a minimum of 60%. A written partial exam is successful if the candidate achieves at least 40% of the total score in both the reading comprehension and the writing test, and if the average of the two parts is a minimum of 60%.

If the candidate applied to take a complex exam and achieved a minimum of 40% in each part of the exam (reading comprehension, written communication, listening comprehension and oral communication), and the average of the four parts of the exam is a minimum of 60%, he/she receives a certificate verifying that they successfully passed the complex exam. If the candidate is only successful on the written or oral partial exam, he/she receives a certificate verifying that they have passed a partial exam.

Language exam certificates are sent from the Examination Centre to examination sites where the exams were taken. Language exam certificates are distributed directly to candidates by staff at the examination sites.

ECL certificates in German and English are monolingual and provide information about the result in the target language. Certificates of the other examination languages are

bilingual and provide information about the result in the target language and in English. The reverse side of the certificate contains a brief description of the language competencies to be demonstrated at the corresponding level.

Inspection of Exam Results

Candidates have the opportunity to inspect their evaluated examination materials within 15 days of the notification of results. (If a candidate is a minor, he or she must be accompanied by a parent or legal representative.) The inspection is carried out after prior registration by completing a form and it takes place exclusively at the International ECL Examination Centre. During the inspection, the following materials can be reviewed: exam papers, answer sheets, evaluation criteria, and oral exam recordings (only the monologue section for data protection reasons).

Procedure for the Inspection

The inspection is conducted under supervision. Candidates are only allowed to take handwritten notes about their own answers and use materials (paper and pen) provided by the examination centre. Copies or electronic recordings (e.g., via mobile phone) of the answer sheets or audio recordings are not permitted. Before leaving the room, the notes must be presented to the supervising staff who will review and sign them. In case of rule violations (e.g., unauthorized note-taking), a report will be made and the notes will be confiscated. At the end of the inspection, candidates sign a declaration confirming the inspection.

Inspection with Consultation

For a fee, candidates have the opportunity to review their evaluated examination materials together with a language expert for 45 minutes. (If a candidate is a minor, he or she must be accompanied by a parent or legal representative.) The purpose of the consultation is to explain the evaluation, clarify any questions, and provide individual recommendations for further preparation. During the consultation, candidates are only allowed to take handwritten notes about their own answers, using materials provided by the examination centre. Making copies or electronic recordings is strictly prohibited.

Review and Re-evaluation

Candidates may request a review or re-evaluation within 15 days after the results were published. A candidate may request a review by reference to infringement of the law or miscalculation of the score, or a candidate may request the re-evaluation of their written tests and oral exam by a third assessor.

The form to request a review or re-evaluation can be downloaded from the ECL website. The “Request for Review/Re-evaluation” form must be submitted to the local examination site within 15 days after the results were published. The head of the Examination Centre makes his/her decision with respect to the request for review/re-evaluation including a detailed professional opinion within 30 days and informs the candidate about the decision in a letter. In the case of a request for review/re-evaluation, the Examination Centre may modify the exam results.

Issuing Duplicate Certificates and Correcting Erroneous Certificates

Requests for duplicates should be submitted to the Examination Centre or the local examination site. The relevant form can be downloaded from the Examination Centre's website.

If the certificate contains erroneous data, upon the request of the candidate and depending on the nature of the error, the Examination Centre can issue a new certificate (e.g. in the case of a misspelled name within one year after the certificate was issued, or for gender and name changes) or an official verification (e.g. lack of second Christian name, wrong place or date of birth). The cost of the duplicate is paid by the party responsible for providing the incorrect information.

Archives

The assessed answer sheets and the audio materials of the oral communication exam are stored at the Examination Centre for three years.

Data safety

Information on data protection for the Examination Centre can be found on its website: https://eclexam.eu/wp-content/uploads/Regulations_for_Protecting_Data_University_of_Pecs.pdf

The current exam regulations are valid until modified.

Pécs, 30. 01. 2025.