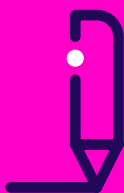


Foundation English Test

Teacher Handbook



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Introducing Foundation English Test

Foundation English Test is a high-quality test that evaluates lower-level English skills of your students and job seekers at a more work-related (vocational) context. It gives entry-level English users a chance to show what they can do and get an accurate result that employers can rely on.

Foundation English Test assesses lower levels of English, which makes it more appropriate for candidates who only require entry-level English (A1 to B1 levels on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)).

Designed and developed by the British Council, the test is delivered on a computer and has four components – Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. The content of the test is a mixture of everyday English and English used in a workplace environment. It takes 80-90 minutes to complete the test and the results are available in 48 hours.

Foundation English Test

Appropriate

Entry-level English users don't have to attempt questions beyond their proficiency but will have the chance to showcase their ability to communicate in English.

Accessible

The test was created by British Council experts and is delivered on a user-friendly platform with a short test time.

Accurate

This is a high-quality test which is fairly and consistently assessed, with comprehensive security controls and measures.

How to use this guide

The purpose of this guide is to provide information to teachers about Foundation English Test to better support learners as they prepare for their exam. To best prepare candidates for their test, it is essential to fully understand the test format, task types, CEFR levels and underlying construct (what is being tested).

This guide covers the Foundation English Test test structure in detail and provides teaching ideas that you can use in your classroom and practice ideas that your learners can use themselves or with their classmates. At the end of this guide, we have compiled a collection of online resources that you can use to prepare for your learners. You will find inspiration for your lessons with links to practice ideas for different levels and for each of the test components that you can try, especially when you need a low-prep activity to support your learners.

When preparing candidates for Foundation English Test:



Utilise an action-oriented approach.

Communication is a purposeful social activity, and in this context, language learners are considered social agents who accomplish tasks in given sets of circumstances or specific environments. Foundation English Test tasks are designed with this in mind, with meaning and relevance to the candidate at the forefront.



Fully understand the test format.

Familiarity with the test format is an important component of exam preparation. Read through the test specifications to understand each task design, including both linguistic and cognitive demands. This will better inform your lesson planning.



Understand the CEFR scales.

Foundation English Test is aligned to the CEFR throughout test development and therefore understanding CEFR descriptors at each level is key to understanding language constructs targeted by each task.



Teach to the construct.

It is essential to target the underlying skills of test tasks when working to improve learners' proficiency. Repeating practice test exercises will only increase familiarity of the test format and while this is important, it will not improve language ability. Understand the construct of each task – what skills are being tested? Create lesson objectives to improve these skill areas.



Assess your learners' current level and confirm their target scores.

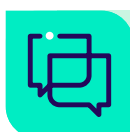
If you are unsure of their current level, use the CEFR illustrative scales to help identify areas of strengths and which could use improvement.

Test overview



It will take candidates **80–90** minutes to complete the test

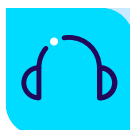
7 minutes



Speaking

- Part 1** Giving general information
- Part 2** Giving personal information
- Part 3** Giving work-related information
- Part 4** Describing, comparing and giving reasons and explanations

28 minutes



Listening

- Part 1** Recognising information
- Part 2** Matching people and ideas

25 minutes



Reading

- Part 1** Understanding sentences
- Part 2** Re-ordering sentences
- Part 3** Matching people and ideas

27 minutes



Writing

- Part 1** Writing words and phrases
- Part 2+3** Writing and linking sentences
- Part 4** Writing paragraphs

It is a good idea to advise candidates to take a practice test so that they become familiar with what they need to do in each part of the test. Click on the icons below to take our practice tests:





Speaking test

There are four parts to the speaking test. For each part, candidates are given a maximum amount of time to speak, but they can choose to end the recording early by clicking on "finish recording".

Before the speaking test begins, candidates will be asked to check their microphone.

Let's check your settings
This will ensure a smooth test experience

- Internet Connection
Check your internet connection
- Speaker Check
Check that your speakers are working
- Microphone Check**
Check that your microphone is working
- Summary
Ensure that you are ready for your test

Checking Microphone
Please say a few words and wait

Default - Microphone Array (Intel® Smart Sound Technology for Di...)

Please say a few words and wait...

Continue

Test Format Description

Part 1: Giving general information

Candidates will hear five questions about themselves. After each question, they will have 10 seconds to reply.

Part 2: Giving personal information

Candidates will hear three short questions about themselves. They will have 30 seconds to reply to each question.

Part 3: Giving work-related information

Candidates will hear three short questions about work. They will have 30 seconds to reply to each question.

Part 4: Describing, comparing and giving reasons and explanations

Candidates will see two photographs. They will have to compare the two pictures and answer two questions about them. They will have 45 seconds for each response.



Part 1: Giving general information

CEFR: Overall spoken production and skills targeted

A1

Can produce mainly simple, isolated phrases about general personal information, people and places.

Key skills: giving general or personal information (who, what, when, where, how often)

BRITISH COUNCIL Foundation English Test

Speaking

Part 1 of 5

When do you usually watch TV?

Recording...
7s

Sample questions:

- Where do you live?
- When do you usually watch TV?
- Who do you usually speak to on the phone?
- What do you like to read?
- How often do you listen to music?

Consider: What language is required to answer these questions? What kind of speaking performance is acceptable at this level?

- Responses need to be on topic and relevant.
- Simple grammatical structures are required. Some mistakes are expected.
- Everyday vocabulary is required. Some wrong word choices are expected.
- Pronunciation should be understandable with some effort from the listener. Some mispronouncing is expected.



Marking scale

Above A1	Fully intelligible responses for all five questions. Test taker completely achieves the task.
A1.2	Three or four of the responses are intelligible. Errors impede understanding in one or two responses.
A1.1	One or two of the responses are intelligible. Errors impede understanding in two or three responses.
A0	No intelligible responses.

Inspiration for your lessons

A1 and above	Invite your learners to practise introducing themselves and talking about personal experiences on familiar topics such as holidays, weekend activities, sports, etc. Practice idea
	Encourage your learners to work with a friend to practise asking and answering questions on familiar topics. Aim to get them to use full sentences in their answers. Practice idea
A0 - A1	Teach your learners vocabulary to talk about personal information and familiar topics such as weather, hobbies, work, family, sports, holidays, etc. Practice idea
	Get learners to practise sharing personal information with a friend or a classmate. Practice idea



Part 2: Giving personal information

CEFR: Overall spoken production and skills targeted

A2

Can produce mainly simple, isolated phrases about personal information, people and places.

Key skills: giving general or personal information with descriptions, expressing personal preferences and opinions

BRITISH COUNCIL Foundation English Test

Speaking

Part 1 of 3

Tell me about one of your parents.

Recording...

16s

Sample questions:

- Tell me about one of your parents.
- Tell me about the streets near your home.
- Tell me about your favourite food.

Consider: What language is required to answer these questions? What kind of speaking performance is acceptable at this level?

- Responses need to be on topic and relevant.
- Simple grammatical structures are required. Some mistakes are expected.
- Everyday vocabulary is required. Some wrong word choices are expected.
- Pronunciation should be understandable with some effort from the listener. Some mispronouncing is expected.

What are the targeted functions?

- Describing, explaining opinions / preferences.



Marking scale

Areas assessed: task fulfilment / topic relevance, grammatical range and accuracy, vocabulary range and accuracy, pronunciation, fluency

B1 (or above)

Likely to be above A2 level.

A2.2

Responses to all **three** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Some simple grammatical structures used correctly but basic mistakes systematically occur.
- Vocabulary is sufficient to respond to the questions, although inappropriate lexical choices are noticeable.
- Mispronunciations are noticeable and frequently place a strain on the listener.
- Frequent pausing, false starts and reformulations but meaning is still clear.

A2.1

Responses to **two** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Some simple grammatical structures used correctly but basic mistakes systematically occur.
- Vocabulary is sufficient to respond to the questions, although inappropriate lexical choices are noticeable.
- Mispronunciations are noticeable and frequently place a strain on the listener.
- Frequent pausing, false starts and reformulations but meaning is still clear.

A1.2

Responses to at least **two** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Grammatical structure is limited to words and phrases. Errors in basic patterns and simple grammar structures impede understanding.
- Vocabulary is limited to very basic words related to personal information.
- Pronunciation is mostly unintelligible except for isolated words.
- Frequent pausing, false starts and reformulations impede understanding.

A1.1

Response to **one** question is on topic and shows the following features:

- Grammatical structure is limited to words and phrases. Errors in basic patterns and simple grammar structures impede understanding.
- Vocabulary is limited to very basic words related to personal information.
- Pronunciation is mostly unintelligible except for isolated words.
- Frequent pausing, false starts and reformulations impede understanding.

A0

No meaningful language or all responses are completely off topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).



Inspiration for your lessons

A1 and above

Invite your learners to share personal experiences and preferences with each other.

[Practice idea](#)

[Practice idea](#)

Get learners to use descriptions to talk about familiar things and use a range of linking words to extend their ideas.

[Practice idea](#)

A0 - A1

Teach your learners to describe common things or people they see around them.

[Practice idea](#)

Teach your learners vocabulary to talk about common experiences.

[Practice idea](#)




Part 3: Giving work-related information

CEFR: Overall spoken production and skills targeted

A2

Can produce mainly simple, isolated phrases about work-related information, people and places.

Key skills: giving general information about work, workplace, job responsibilities

 **Foundation English Test**

Speaking

Part 1 of 3

Tell me about what kind of work people do in an office.

Recording...

19s

Sample questions:

- Tell me about the kind of work people do in an office.
- Tell me about a place where people go after work.
- Tell me about some of the things a schoolteacher does.

Consider: What language is required to answer these questions? What kind of speaking performance is acceptable at this level?

- Responses need to be on topic and relevant.
- Simple grammatical structures are required. Some mistakes are expected.
- Everyday vocabulary is required. Some wrong word choices are expected.
- Pronunciation should be understandable with some effort from the listener. Some mispronouncing is expected.



Marking scale

Areas assessed: task fulfilment / topic relevance, grammatical range and accuracy, vocabulary range and accuracy, pronunciation, fluency

B1 (or above)

Likely to be above A2 level.

A2.2

Responses to all **three** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Some simple grammatical structures used correctly but basic mistakes systematically occur.
- Vocabulary is sufficient to respond to the questions, although inappropriate lexical choices are noticeable.
- Mispronunciations are noticeable and frequently place a strain on the listener.
- Frequent pausing, false starts and reformulations but meaning is still clear.

A2.1

Responses to **two** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Some simple grammatical structures used correctly but basic mistakes systematically occur.
- Vocabulary is sufficient to respond to the questions, although inappropriate lexical choices are noticeable.
- Mispronunciations are noticeable and frequently place a strain on the listener.
- Frequent pausing, false starts and reformulations but meaning is still clear.

A1.2

Responses to at least **two** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Grammatical structure is limited to words and phrases. Errors in basic patterns and simple grammar structures impede understanding.
- Vocabulary is limited to very basic words related to personal information.
- Pronunciation is mostly unintelligible except for isolated words.
- Frequent pausing, false starts and reformulations impede understanding.

A1.1

Response to **one** question is on topic and shows the following features:

- Grammatical structure is limited to words and phrases. Errors in basic patterns and simple grammar structures impede understanding.
- Vocabulary is limited to very basic words related to personal information.
- Pronunciation is mostly unintelligible except for isolated words.
- Frequent pausing, false starts and reformulations impede understanding.

A0

No meaningful language or all responses are completely off topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).



Inspiration for your lessons

A2 and above

Teach your learners more specific vocabulary to describe work and work responsibilities.

[Practice idea](#)

Invite your learners to describe different work-related situations with a partner.

[Practice idea](#)

A0 - A2

Get your learners to describe different workplace situations with a classmate.

[Practice idea](#)

Support your learners with sentence stems and phrases to talk about common situations at work.

[Practice idea](#)



Part 4: Describing, comparing and giving reasons and explanations

CEFR: Overall spoken production and skills targeted

B1

Can reasonably and fluently sustain a straightforward description of one of a variety of subjects within their field of interest, presenting it as a linear sequence of points.

Key skills: describe, compare and provide reasons and explanations



Tell me what you see in the two pictures.

Sample questions:

- What do you see in these two pictures?
- What would it be like to work in these two places?
- Which of these two places would you prefer to work in? Why?

Consider: What language is required to answer these questions? What kind of speaking performance is acceptable at this level?

- Response needs to be on topic and relevant.
- Control of simple grammatical structures.
- Complex structures attempted with errors.
- Sufficient range of vocabulary for the task. Errors when expressing more complex ideas.
- Occasional strain on listener although pronunciation is intelligible.
- Clear meaning with frequent pausing.

What are the targeted functions?

- Describing, comparing, speculating, explaining / opinion, elaborating, expressing preferences.



Marking scale

Areas assessed: task fulfilment / topic relevance, grammatical range and accuracy, vocabulary range and accuracy, pronunciation, fluency

B2 (or above)

Likely to be above the B1 level.

B1.2

Responses to all **three** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures.
 - Sufficient range and control of vocabulary for the task. Errors occur when expressing complex thoughts.
 - Pronunciation is intelligible but inappropriate mispronunciations put an occasional strain on the listener.
 - Some pausing, false starts and reformulations.
 - Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.
-

B1.1

Responses to **two** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures.
 - Sufficient range and control of vocabulary for the task. Errors occur when expressing complex thoughts.
 - Pronunciation is intelligible but inappropriate mispronunciations put an occasional strain on the listener.
 - Some pausing, false starts and reformulations.
 - Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.
-

A2.1

Responses to at least **two** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Uses some simple grammatical structures correctly but systematically makes basic mistakes.
 - Vocabulary will be limited to concrete topics and descriptions. Inappropriate lexical choices for the task are noticeable.
 - Mispronunciations are noticeable and put a strain on the listener.
 - Noticeable pausing, false starts and reformulations.
 - Cohesion between ideas is limited. Responses tend to be a list of points.
-



Marking scale (continued)

Areas assessed: task fulfilment / topic relevance, grammatical range and accuracy, vocabulary range and accuracy, pronunciation, fluency

A2.1

Response to **one** question is on topic and shows the following features:

- Uses some simple grammatical structures correctly but systematically makes basic mistakes.
- Vocabulary will be limited to concrete topics and descriptions. Inappropriate lexical choices for the task are noticeable.
- Mispronunciations are noticeable and put a strain on the listener.
- Noticeable pausing, false starts and reformulations.
- Cohesion between ideas is limited. Responses tend to be a list of points.

0

Performance below A2, or no meaningful language or the responses are completely off topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).

Inspiration for your lessons

B1 and above

Teach your learners to make comparisons between pictures and objects around them. Support them with sentence stems and vocabulary for making comparisons.

[Practice idea](#)

Encourage your learners to express and justify their opinions on what they like and dislike with their partners outside the class.

[Practice idea](#)

A0 - A2

Teach simple comparative forms to help your learners make comparisons between things around them.

[Practice idea](#)

Encourage your learners to bring photographs or images from home to describe with partners for extra practice and share the stories behind the photographs.

[Practice idea](#)



Listening test

There are three parts to the listening test. Candidates can listen to each of the recordings twice.

At the beginning of the test, they will be asked to check the volume of their headset.

Test format

Description

Part 1: Recognising information

Candidates will listen to a short telephone message, monologue or dialogue. They will see a question with three possible answers. They must choose the correct answer to the question. Each recording is about 30 to 40 seconds long.

Part 2: Matching people and ideas

Candidates will listen to four people talking about a topic. Each person will speak for 30 seconds. They will then match the speaker to their response from the options given.



Part 1: Recognising information

CEFR: Overall listening comprehension and skills targeted

A2

Can understand enough to be able to meet needs of a concrete type provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated. Can understand phrases and expressions related to areas of most immediate priority (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment) provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated.

Key skills: identify specific pieces of information, word recognition

Listening

Question 1 of 17

Bookmark

Mala is telling her colleague about getting to the office. What is the bus number?

Play/Stop

- | | |
|---|-------|
| A | Three |
| B | Five |
| C | Seven |

This sample question focuses on concrete information. This task requires the candidate to listen for specific details. Often this will be words or a number.

Listening

Question 16 of 17

Bookmark

Listen to a man talking on the radio about his work. How does he feel about the future of his job?

Play/Stop

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| A | He is concerned. |
| B | He is excited. |
| C | He is confused. |



Inspiration for your lessons

A2 and above

Get your learners to practise saying and writing down numbers in English in the form of time, measurements, phone numbers and dates.

[Practice idea](#)

Get your learners to practise listening for specific information in classroom and homework activities.

[Practice idea](#)

A0 - A1

In class, give your learners practice in listening to and writing down numbers and names of places and people. Teach them to listen for spellings of proper nouns.

[Practice idea](#)

Encourage your learners to practise writing down numbers, addresses, and spellings of proper nouns with a friend.

[Practice idea](#)



Part 2: Matching people and ideas

CEFR: Overall listening comprehension and skills targeted

B1

Can understand straightforward factual information about common everyday or job related topics, identifying both general messages and specific details, provided speech is clearly articulated in a generally familiar accent. Can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure etc., including short narratives.

Key skills: identify / infer attitudes, intentions, opinions of the speakers, understand paraphrased content

Listening

Question 17 of 17

Bookmark

Four people are talking about manual labour. Complete the sentences below.

⏮ Play/Stop

Speaker A ...	<input type="text"/>
Speaker B ...	<input type="text"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> feels tired after work. travels for work. enjoys working with others.
Speaker C ...	<input type="text"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> arrives late to work. wants another job.
Speaker D ...	<input type="text"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> doesn't like their boss.

This sample question focuses on concrete information. This task requires the candidate to listen for specific details. Often this will be words or a number.



Inspiration for your lessons

B1 and above

Teach your learners ways to express opinions, intentions, and feelings.

[Practice idea](#)

Invite your learners to partner up with each other outside the class and express views on things and happenings around them using the vocabulary learnt in the class.

[Practice idea](#)

A0 - B1

Give your learners a chance to explore different signposting used by speakers through a variety of audio recordings. Teach the purpose of signposting phrases to improve their awareness.

[Practice idea](#)

Encourage your learners to watch short films or programmes on TV in their free time with sub-titles in English if needed so that they can become familiar with conversational phrases and signposts.

[Practice idea](#)



Reading test

There are three parts to the reading test. The questions become more difficult as the test progresses.

Test format	Description
Part 1: Understanding sentences	Candidates will read a short text with a gap in each sentence. They will have to choose one word from the options given to fill each gap.
Part 2: Re-ordering sentences	The text is 40–50 words long. Candidates will see a text with six sentences. The first sentence is in the correct place. The remaining are out of order. They will have to put them in the correct order to make a short clear text.
Part 3: Matching people and ideas	The text is 90–100 words long. Candidates will read four short paragraphs on a topic. Each paragraph gives one person's ideas and opinions on the topic. They will then see seven opinions. Candidates must match the opinion to the person. Each paragraph is 70–80 words long.



Part 1: Understanding sentences

CEFR: Overall reading comprehension and skills targeted

A1

Can understand very short, simple texts, a single phrase at a time, picking up familiar names, words and basic phrases and rereading as required.

Key skills: ability to read at sentence level

Reading

Question 1 of 5

Bookmark

Read the email from Sam to her friend Jasmine. Choose one word from the list for each gap. The first one is done for you.

Hi Jasmine,

My new job is and interesting.

I'm cars at a big car company.

I talk to people on the and arrange appointments.

The company is a 15-minute walk from my .

I work with ten other in the office.

Everybody at work is and nice.

Talk to you soon!

Sam

This task is designed to copy or simulate a real-world text and targets an A1 learner. Overall, the text is short, simple, and covers a familiar topic. The reader does not need to understand the entire text to be able to answer the question, rather they need to be able to read at sentence level.

Note that the word choices given are not testing grammatical or lexical knowledge but focus on which word is most appropriate for the meaning of the sentence.



Inspiration for your lessons

A1 and above

Practise simple reading comprehension activities in class with your learners to improve their reading skills and vocabulary.

[Practice idea](#)

Get your learners to find synonyms of keywords in short texts they read in class or at home. Get them to make a class poster or a short online poster of synonyms.

[Practice idea](#)

A0 - A1

Play vocabulary games in class to help your learners remember new words.

[Practice idea](#)

Encourage your learners to maintain a vocabulary notebook to practise spellings and new words related to familiar every-day topics such as work, family, hobbies, weather, sports, tv, etc.

[Practice idea](#)



Part 2: Re-ordering sentences

CEFR: Overall reading comprehension and skills targeted

A2

Can understand short, simple texts on familiar, concrete matters which consist of high frequency everyday or job-related language. Can understand short, simple texts containing the highest frequency vocabulary, including a proportion of shared international vocabulary items.

Key skills: understand a short text as a whole, understand relationship between sentences

The sentences below give information to new employees about completing a work safety test. Put the sentences in the right order. The first sentence is done for you.

How to take the online 'work safety' test

You need to go to our website and log in by using the employee code.

⋮

Once this time is up, the system will store your results on your employee page.

⋮

This selection will open a page with some information about the test.

⋮

After entering this code, you should select 'Take work safety test' from the list.

⋮

You have one hour to complete the test from the moment you begin.

This task requires candidates to understand the relationship between sentences and how to organise cohesive text. Overall, the topic is familiar and concrete, and the text uses more commonly used or high-frequency vocabulary. Candidates need to understand this short text as a whole.

Notice the reference and linking words or signposting language used in the sample task below.

The sentences below give information to new employees about completing a work safety test. Put the sentences in the right order. The first sentence is done for you.

How to take the online 'work safety' test

You need to go to our website and log in by using the employee code.

⋮

Once this time is up, the system will store your results on your employee page.

⋮

This selection will open a page with some information about the test.

⋮

After entering this code, you should select 'Take work safety test' from the list.

⋮

You have one hour to complete the test from the moment you begin.



Inspiration for your lessons

A2 and above

Help your learners analyse text organisation in class for a variety of texts taken from many different sources. For example, a lifestyle article from a newspaper, a scientific article in a newspaper, a blog post from a website, an email from their workplace, etc.

[Practice idea](#)

A0 - A1

Teach your learners sequencing words and referencing in sentences to help them see connections between sentences in a text and improve their understanding of text organisation.

[Practice idea](#)

Invite your learners to cut up short texts into separate sentences and get a partner to re-order the text. Encourage learners to reflect on what clues in the text allow re-ordering.

[Practice idea](#)



Part 3: Matching people and ideas

CEFR: Overall reading comprehension and skills targeted

B1

Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to their field and interests with a satisfactory level of comprehension.

Key skills: understand main idea of a text, infer opinions

Question 5 of 5 Bookmark

Four people were asked about their work experience with a local company. Read the texts and answer the questions below.

Tomasz

I had heard from friends that work experience tends to involve observing others rather than doing actual work. That left me quite unprepared for my week in the office. I was physically exhausted by the end of each day, but that was fine with me, since I learned an incredible amount. I spoke to a manager about continuing on a permanent basis after I graduated. She told me to send an application letter to the personnel department.

Martha

I've always wanted to work in journalism, and I was offered work experience in a news office. After I received the offer, I could hardly think about anything else. In the end, the experience was a disappointment. Some of the office staff seemed unwilling to engage with me, and while my supervisor was friendly, I didn't see very much of him. Somehow, I found some work to do, but I'm not sure how much I learned from the experience.

Paul

My work experience was voluntary, and I signed up for it without thinking. In the end, I spent most of the time just watching people do things on their computers. They weren't very interested in teaching me anything, and to be honest, I wasn't that keen to learn. I work best when I'm active. At home I spend most of my free time building furniture. This experience certainly helped me realise that sitting at a desk all day is not for me.

Rajinder

When I arrived, my supervisor was in a meeting, and I felt rather alone. But after an hour, she came out and showed me around the office, so by lunchtime I was familiar with every part of it. We spent much of the week together and I was grateful for her support, as this was my first experience of work. She kept me extremely busy, and I gained a lot of experience that should help me when applying for a job.

1. Who would like to work for this company?
2. Who was looking forward to work experience?
3. Who did not have enough to do?
4. Who was busier than they expected?
5. Who prefers more physical work?
6. Who thought their supervisor was helpful?
7. Who felt that people were not helpful enough?

This task requires candidates to read and understand a short paragraph. They need to understand the main idea and arrive at an opinion.

Practise going through each of the texts with learners and highlight which areas indicate the person's overall opinion and which words or phrases may distract from the correct response.



Inspiration for your lessons

B1 and above

Get your learners to identify opinions from short online reviews e.g. films, music.

[Practice idea](#)

Practise verbs and phrases expressing people's desires including conditionals and hypothetical phrases in class.

[Practice idea](#)

A0 - A2

Teach skimming and scanning in class and encourage your learners to practise using a variety of texts.

[Practice idea](#)

Get your learners to pay attention to clues in a text to decide whether the statement is an opinion or a fact.

[Practice idea](#)



Writing test

There are four parts to the writing test. There are social media-type texts and emails as part of the test.

Test format	Description
Part 1: Writing words and phrases	Candidates will read six short messages asking to give simple information about themselves. The first sentence is an example. They will need to write short answers to the next five messages (1–5 words).
Part 2: Writing and linking sentences	Candidates will read a question about themselves. They will then write a short answer (20–30 words).
Part 3: Writing and linking sentences	Candidates will read a question about work and write a short answer (20–30 words).
Part 4: Writing paragraphs	Candidates will see three social media-type questions about work. They will then write answers to all three questions (30–40 words for each answer).



Part 1: Writing words and phrases

CEFR: Overall written comprehension and skills targeted

A1


Can give information in writing about matters of personal relevance (e.g. likes and dislikes, family, pets) using simple words and basic expressions. Can write simple isolated phrases and sentences.


Key skills: writing at the word / phrase level


Question 1 of 4


Part One - You have 5 messages from a new friend. Write a short answer (1–5 words) to each message.
Recommended time: 3 minutes.

Example How are you? I'm fine, thanks.

What is your favourite food? 

What do you like doing on holiday? 

What is your favourite drink? 

When do you usually eat lunch? 

How often do you use public transport? 

In this part, one word or short answers are enough to give a meaningful response. Spelling mistakes are not penalised in this part.



Marking scale

Areas assessed: task fulfilment and communicative competence

Above A1	Fully intelligible responses for all five questions. Candidate completely achieves the task.
A1.2	Three or four of the responses are intelligible. Errors impede understanding in one or two responses.
A1.1	One or two of the responses are intelligible. Errors impede understanding in two or three responses.
A0	No intelligible responses.

Inspiration for your lessons

A1 and above	<p>Teach questions and statements in present simple and give your learners a chance to ask and answer questions about each other on familiar topics.</p> <p>Practice idea</p> <p>Encourage your learners to play vocabulary games among their friends and partner outside the class. There are many online and offline games they can play.</p> <p>Practice idea</p>
A0 - A1	<p>Encourage your learners to maintain a vocabulary notebook to practise new words related to familiar every-day topics such as work, family, hobbies, weather, sports, tv, etc.</p> <p>Practice idea</p> <p>Play vocabulary games in class to help your learners remember new words and spellings.</p> <p>Practice idea</p>



Part 2: Writing and linking sentences

CEFR: Overall written comprehension and skills targeted

A2

Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like 'and,' 'but' and 'because'.

Key skills: short written description of concrete, personal information at the sentence level

Question 2 of 4 🔖 Bookmark

Part Two - Your new friend asked you to join an online group about jobs and work. To register you have to answer two questions. The first question (A) is about yourself. Write in complete sentences. Use 20–30 words. Recommended time: 7 minutes.

A. Can you describe your home?

B I U ✖

Type your answer here

Words 0 / 45

Consider: What is the task construct? In other words, what is the task trying to test?

- Relevance / topic relevance
- Sentence formation
- Use of connectors to link sentences
- Punctuation and spelling
- Simple grammatical structures

What is the genre?

- Form filling / providing personal details

What are the targeted functions?

- Describing people, places, jobs, likes/dislikes, interests, habits, routines and past experiences (based on British Council EAQUALS Code Inventory)



Marking scale

Areas assessed: task fulfilment and communicative competence.

B1 (or above)

Likely to be above A2 level.

A2.2

- On topic.
- Uses simple grammatical structures to produce writing at the sentence level. Errors with basic structures common. Errors do not impede understanding of the response.
- Mostly accurate punctuation and spelling.
- Vocabulary is sufficient to respond to the question(s).
- Some attempts at using simple connectors and cohesive devices to link sentences.

A2.1

- On topic.
- Uses simple grammatical structures to produce writing at the sentence level. Errors with basic structures common. Errors impede understanding in parts of the response.
- Punctuation and spelling mistakes are noticeable.
- Vocabulary is mostly sufficient to respond to the question(s) but inappropriate lexical choices are noticeable.
- Response is a list of sentences with no use of connectors or cohesive devices to link sentences.

A1.2

- Not fully on topic.
- Grammatical structure is limited to words and phrases. Errors in basic patterns and simple grammar structures impede understanding.
- Little or no use of accurate punctuation. Spelling mistakes common.
- Vocabulary is limited to very basic words related to personal information and is not sufficient to respond to the question(s).
- No use of cohesion.

A1.1

- Response limited to a few words or phrases.
- Grammar and vocabulary errors so serious and frequent that meaning is unintelligible.

A0

No meaningful language or all responses are completely off-topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).



Inspiration for your lessons

A2 and above

Teach your learners how to form compound sentences using and, but, so, or, etc.

[Practice idea](#)

Train your learners to give peer feedback on topics learned in the class and encourage them to give feedback to each other on their homework tasks.

[Practice idea](#)

A0 - A1

Teach your learners to fill every-day forms such as those used to sign up for different facilities (gym membership, health club, reading club, library membership, etc.).

[Practice idea](#)

Encourage your learners to discuss different forms they encounter in their daily life and ways to answer the questions in there.

[Practice idea](#)



Part 3: Writing and linking sentences

CEFR: Overall written comprehension and skills targeted

A2

Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like 'and,' 'but' and 'because'.

Key skills: short written description of concrete, personal information at the sentence level

Question 3 of 4 🔖 Bookmark

Part Three - Your new friend asked you to join an online group about jobs and work. To register you have to answer two questions. The second question (B) is about work. Write in complete sentences. Use 20–30 words. Recommended time: 7 minutes.

B. What kind of work do you enjoy doing?

B I U G

Type your answer here

Words 0 / 45

Consider: What is the task construct? In other words, what is the task trying to test?

- Relevance / topic relevance
- Sentence formation
- Use of connectors to link sentences
- Punctuation and spelling
- Simple grammatical structures

What is the genre?

- Form filling / providing personal details in the context of work

What are the targeted functions?

- Describing people, places, jobs, likes/dislikes, interests, habits, routines and past experiences (based on British Council EAQUALS Code Inventory)



Marking scale

Areas assessed: task fulfilment and communicative competence.

B1 (or above)

Likely to be above A2 level.

A2.2

- On topic.
- Uses simple grammatical structures to produce writing at the sentence level. Errors with basic structures common. Errors do not impede understanding of the response.
- Mostly accurate punctuation and spelling.
- Vocabulary is sufficient to respond to the question(s).
- Some attempts at using simple connectors and cohesive devices to link sentences.

A2.1

- On topic.
- Uses simple grammatical structures to produce writing at the sentence level. Errors with basic structures common. Errors impede understanding in parts of the response.
- Punctuation and spelling mistakes are noticeable.
- Vocabulary is mostly sufficient to respond to the question(s) but inappropriate lexical choices are noticeable.
- Response is a list of sentences with no use of connectors or cohesive devices to link sentences.

A1.2

- Not fully on topic.
- Grammatical structure is limited to words and phrases. Errors in basic patterns and simple grammar structures impede understanding.
- Little or no use of accurate punctuation. Spelling mistakes common.
- Vocabulary is limited to very basic words related to personal information and is not sufficient to respond to the question(s).
- No use of cohesion.

A1.1

- Response limited to a few words or phrases.
- Grammar and vocabulary errors so serious and frequent that meaning is unintelligible.

A0

No meaningful language or all responses are completely off-topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).



Inspiration for your lessons

A2 and above

Give your learners opportunities to talk about common workplace situations and their pros and cons. For example, *working from home vs. working from the office, working in groups vs. working alone, attending meetings in person vs. videoconference, etc.*

[Practice idea](#)

Hold short debates in class on the above topics and encourage your learners to justify their opinions appropriately.

[Practice idea](#)

A0 - A1

Teach your learners vocabulary to express preferences and interests and ways to justify them.

[Practice idea](#)

Encourage your learners to paraphrase or use synonyms when they are unable to recall a word when speaking.

[Practice idea](#)



Part 4: Writing paragraphs


CEFR: Overall written comprehension and skills targeted

B1

Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within their field of interest by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence.

Key skills: interactive writing, responding to a series of written questions with short paragraph level responses


Part Four - You have three questions from other people in the online group about jobs and work. Answer their questions using sentences. Use 30–40 words for each answer. Answer all three questions. Recommended time: 10 minutes.

Daya: I am looking for a job. I have answered six advertisements and have had two interviews so far. Can you tell me about your experience of looking for a job? 

B I U S

Type your answer here


Words 0 / 60

Ellis: I have an interview for a job at an office. It's my first job interview and I want it to be a success. Can you give me some advice? 

B I U S

Type your answer here

Words 0 / 60

Milja: Some people say that work experience is sometimes more important than a qualification. What is your opinion? 

Consider: What is the task construct? In other words, what is the task trying to test?

- Answering the question relevantly and completely
- Control of simple grammatical structures
- Attempting complex structures
- Sufficient vocabulary for the question
- Creating a linear sequence of events using cohesive devices

What is the genre?

- Online chat / discussion forum

What are the targeted functions?

- Describing people, places, jobs, likes/dislikes, interests, habits, routines, past experiences, feelings, emotions, attitudes, hopes, plans, expression of opinions, agreement or disagreement (based on British Council EAQUALS Core Inventory)



Marking scale

Areas assessed: task fulfilment / topic relevance, punctuation, grammatical range and accuracy, vocabulary range and accuracy and cohesion.

B2 (or above)

Likely to be above the B1 level.

B1.2

Responses to all three questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures.
- Punctuation and spelling mostly accurate. Errors do not impede understanding.
- Vocabulary is sufficient to respond to the questions.
- Uses simple cohesive devices to organise responses as a linear sequence of sentences.

B1.1

Responses to two questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures.
- Punctuation and spelling mostly accurate. Errors do not impede understanding.
- Vocabulary is sufficient to respond to the questions.
- Uses simple cohesive devices to organise responses as a linear sequence of sentences.

A2.2

- Not fully on topic.
- Grammatical structure is limited to words and phrases. Errors in basic patterns and simple grammar structures impede understanding.
- Little or no use of accurate punctuation. Spelling mistakes common.
- Vocabulary is limited to very basic words related to personal information and is not sufficient to respond to the question(s).
- No use of cohesion.

A2.1

Response to one question is on topic and shows the following features:

- Uses simple grammatical structures to produce writing at the sentence level. Errors with simple structures common and sometimes impede understanding.
- Punctuation and spelling mistakes are noticeable.
- Vocabulary is not sufficient to respond to the question(s). Inappropriate lexical choices are noticeable and sometimes impede understanding.
- Responses are lists of sentences and not organised as cohesive texts.

Below A2

Performance below A2, or no meaningful language or the responses are completely off-topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).



Inspiration for your lessons

B1 and above

Get learners to practise phrases to give simple suggestions, descriptions and opinions on abstract topics.

[Practice idea](#)

In your class WhatsApp group or online forums, encourage your learners to interact with each other socially and practise different language functions.

[Practice idea](#)

A0 - A2

Invite your learners to practise writing full sentence responses to questions.

[Practice idea](#)

In your class WhatsApp group or online forums, encourage your learners to interact with each other socially and give full sentence responses.

[Practice idea](#)

Results

Foundation English Test scores show your students' ability to understand and communicate in English.

How are the results presented?

The results from Foundation English Test are presented in two ways:

- A score from 0 to 20 for each of the four skills tested.
- A CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) level for each skill.

Candidates will also get an overall CEFR level. They will see more information on what each level means on the back of the report.

BRITISH COUNCIL

Foundation English Test

Candidate report

DEMO CUSTOMER	01.03.2023	FET-0002570
Candidate name	Test date	Enrolment ID
British Council Austria	Passport	4209211
Organisation	ID type	ID number

A1
Overall CEFR grade
45/80

Listening 10/20 | A1
Reading 3/20 | A0
Speaking 18/20 | B1
Writing 14/20 | A2

CEFR skill profile and scale score

	A0	A1	A2	B1
Listening	Progress bar to A1			
Reading	Progress bar to A0			
Speaking	Progress bar to B1			
Writing	Progress bar to A2			

Professor Barry O'Sullivan OBE

www.britishcouncil.org/foundationenglishtest
<https://credentialids.britishcouncil.org/590928fd-cf11-4f77-adaa-9729322ddc9>

QR code:

The validity of Foundation English Test results can be confirmed by scanning this QR code or by following the link at the bottom left-hand corner of the certificate.

Candidate details and test information

CEFR skill profile:

Gives CEFR levels for each skill. These can be compared.

Score:

These scores should NOT be compared across skills. This is because benchmarks for each skill are different.

Using the CEFR

The CEFR is not just about testing. It is a comprehensive framework focusing on the successful learning, teaching and assessment of languages. It can be used for setting learning goals, discussing levels with learners, designing learning tasks and self-assessment. The CEFR scales are the starting point of the Foundation English Test scoring system.

Like most proficiency exams, Foundation English Test starts with lower level familiar / concrete topics and makes a transition towards higher-level unfamiliar / abstract topics. This results in an increase in difficulty both linguistically and cognitively throughout the test.

Unlike other language frameworks that focus only on linguistic criteria, the CEFR takes into account other competencies as well. It is important to familiarise yourself with these scales as well as they can contribute to task design, difficulty and marking criteria.

As a teacher, you can use the CEFR global scales to identify the level of your learners.

CEFR Global scales

Basic User	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce themselves and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where they live, people they know and things they have. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.
	A2	Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of their background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need. Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g., very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography).

CEFR Global scales (continued)

Independent User	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in their 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.
Proficient user	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express themselves 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.
	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express themselves spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.

Resources

Foundation English Test resources

The British Council's Foundation English Test webpage and other support-materials.

[Foundation English Test Page](#)

Foundation English Test practice tests:

[Speaking](#)

[Reading](#)

[Listening](#)

[Writing](#)

[The British Council-EAQUALS core inventory](#)

The Core Inventory is a free resource for teachers and learners available online. In addition to the PDF document, teachers can also download Core Inventory posters for levels A1-C1 of the CEFR.

The British Council websites and publications

The British Council has its own publications to support English teachers which can be found on these webpages.

[TeachingEnglish resource books](#)

[TeachingEnglish resources](#)

[LearnEnglish website](#)

[LearnEnglish YouTube channel](#)

[LearnEnglish podcast](#)

[LearnEnglish apps](#)

BBC Learning English

BBC Learning English website, podcasts and YouTube channel have some high-quality resources targeting grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation for a range of levels.

[BBC Learning English website](#)

[BBC Learning English podcast](#)

[BBC Learning English YouTube channel](#)

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