

Information for students

At the B2 level there is a focus on effective argument. Students are able to account for and sustain their opinions in discussion by providing relevant explanations, arguments and comments. They can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options and can develop an argument giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. They can take an active part in informal discussion in familiar contexts, commenting, putting their point of view clearly, evaluating alternative proposals and making and responding to hypotheses. They are able to hold their own effectively in social discourse and understand in detail what is said to them in the standard spoken language even in a noisy environment. They can initiate discourse, take their turn when appropriate and end a conversation when they need to, though they may not always do this elegantly. They can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without imposing strain on either party. There is a new degree of language awareness. They are able to correct mistakes if they have led to misunderstandings, can make a note of "favourite mistakes" and consciously monitor speech for it/them and generally they can correct slips and errors if they become conscious of them.

Global

At the B2 level, students should be able to understand the main ideas of complex texts on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in their field of specialisation. They can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. They can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

Listening

Students can understand standard speech spoken at a normal rate and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. They can understand the essentials of lectures and most TV news and current affairs programs and can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.

Reading

At this level, students can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints. They can understand contemporary literary prose and can adapt style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, using appropriate reference-sources selectively.

Spoken interaction

Students can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. They are able to take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts and can account for and sustain views clearly by providing relevant explanations and arguments.

Spoken production

They can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to their field of interest, expanding and supporting ideas with subsidiary points and relevant examples. They can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

Writing

Students are able to write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to their interests. They can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. They can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.

Listening Proficiency scales

Students at the B2 level of proficiency can understand in detail what is said to them in the standard spoken language and can do this even when there is some noise in the background. They can understand standard spoken language, live or broadcast, on both familiar and unfamiliar topics normally encountered in personal, academic or vocational life. Only extreme background noise, unclear structure and/or idiomatic usage cause some problems. They can understand the main ideas of complex speech on both concrete and abstract topics delivered in a standard language including technical discussions in their field of specialisation. They can follow extended speech and complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar, and the direction of the talk is clearly stated by the speaker. They can follow the essentials of lectures, talks and reports and other forms of presentation which use complex ideas and language and can understand announcements and messages on concrete and abstract topics spoken in standard language at normal speed. They can understand most radio documentaries and most other recorded or broadcast audio material delivered in standard language and can identify the speaker's mood, tone, etc. They can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes such as documentaries, live interviews, talk shows, plays and the majority of films in standard language. They can follow a lecture or talk within their own field, provided the presentation is clear.

Reading Proficiency scales

Students at the B2 level of proficiency can read correspondence relating to their fields of interest and easily understand the essential meaning. They can understand specialized articles outside their field, provided that they can use a dictionary to confirm terminology. They can read many kinds of texts quite easily at different speeds and in different ways according to their purpose in reading and the type of text. They have a broad reading vocabulary, but sometimes experience difficulty with less common words and phrases. They can quickly identify the content and relevance of news items, articles and reports on a wide range of professional topics, deciding whether closer study is worthwhile. They can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints.

Speaking Proficiency scales

Students at this level can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo; although they can be hesitant as they search for patterns and expressions, there are few noticeably long pauses. They can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without imposing strain on either party. They are able to express themselves with relative ease. Despite some problems with formulation resulting in pauses and 'cul-de-sacs', they are able to keep going effectively without help. Students at this level have a sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints and develop arguments without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms to do so. They have a sufficient range of language to describe unpredictable situations, explain the main points in an idea or problem with reasonable precision and express thoughts on abstract or cultural topics such as music and films. They have a good range of vocabulary for matters connected to their field and most general topics and can vary formulation to avoid frequent repetition, but lexical gaps can still cause hesitation and circumlocution. Lexical accuracy is generally high, though some confusion and incorrect word choice does occur without hindering communication. They show a relatively high degree of grammatical control and do not make mistakes which lead to misunderstanding. They communicate with reasonable accuracy in familiar contexts, generally with good control though with noticeable mother-tongue influence. Errors occur, but it is clear what they are trying to express. They have acquired a clear, natural, pronunciation and intonation and can with some effort keep up with and contribute to group discussions even when speech is fast and colloquial. They can sustain relationships with native speakers without unintentionally amusing or irritating them or requiring them to behave other than they would with a native speaker. They can express themselves appropriately in situations and avoid crass errors of formulation. They can perform and respond to a wide range of language functions, using their most common exponents in a neutral register. They are able to adjust to the changes of direction, style and emphasis normally found in conversation and can vary

formulation of what they want to say. They can adapt their expressions to deal with less routine, even difficult, situations and can initiate discourse, take their turn when appropriate and end conversation when they need to, though they may not always do this elegantly. They can use stock phrases (e.g. 'That's a difficult question to answer') to gain time and keep the turn whilst formulating what to say. They are able to intervene in a discussion on a familiar topic, using a suitable phrase to get the floor. They can develop a clear description or narrative, expanding and supporting their main points with relevant supporting detail and examples and can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link their utterances into clear, coherent discourse, though there may be some 'jumpiness' in a long contribution.

Writing Proficiency scales

Students at the B2 level of proficiency can synthesize information and arguments from a number of sources. They can construct a chain of reasoned argument and can speculate about causes, consequences and hypothetical situations.

Level B2 Learner Outcomes Students will be able to use the following:

Functions / notions

Describing experiences

Describing feelings and emotions

Describing hopes and plans

Giving precise information

Expressing abstract ideas

Expressing certainty, probability, doubt

Generalizing and qualifying

Synthesizing, evaluating, glossing information

Speculating

Expressing opinions

Expressing agreement/ disagreement

Expressing reaction, e.g. indifference

Critiquing and reviewing

Developing an argument in academic discourse style

Discourse Functions

Checking understanding

Managing interaction (interrupting, changing topic, resuming or continuing) Taking the initiative in interaction

Control and delegation at start
Keeping interaction participants on topic
Taking initiative in non-control situation
Encouraging and inviting another speaker to continue / come in.
Invitation in one-to-one interaction
Invitation in group interaction
Interacting informally, reacting, expressing interest, sympathy, surprise Discourse Markers

Linkers: sequential – past time
Connecting words expressing cause and effect, contrast etc.
Linkers: although, in spite of, despite
Discourse markers to structure formal speech

Verb forms
Simple past (narrative)
Past continuous (narrative)
Used to (narrative)
Would expressing habit in the past
Past perfect
Past perfect continuous
Future time (will & going to)
Future continuous (Prediction)
Future perfect
Future perfect continuous
Present Perfect
Present perfect continuous
Mixed conditionals
Wish
Extended phrasal verbs
All passive forms

Reported speech (range of tenses)
Relative clauses
Modals of Deduction and Speculation
Modals: can't have, needn't have
Articles
With abstract nouns
Adjectives and adverbs

Attitudinal adverbs

Collocation of intensifiers

Lexis

Contrasting opinions (on the one hand . . .) Summarizing exponents (briefly, all in all . . .)

Collocation

Colloquial language

Topics

Education

Film

Books and literature

News, lifestyles and current affairs

Media

Arts

Learner Training

Alternative memory / associative techniques

Word building

Synonyms / antonyms

Keeping a record of collocation

Use of dictionary to distinguish separability of multi-word verbs