

C1 Syllabus

Use this syllabus to prepare for your C1 TAL or Open Badge exam.

Grammar

1. Style, Emphasis & Formality

- Cleft Sentences: Use *It* and *What* clefts for emphasis and rhetorical effect.
- Inversion for Emphasis & Formality: Extend inversion beyond basic negative adverbials to include structures with: *Under no circumstances*, *Only after/when*, *So/such*, *Hardly ... when*, *No sooner ... than*, and *Little*.
- Fronting & Ellipsis: Move information to the front of a sentence to highlight important information and omit words that are understood from context to avoid repetition (ellipsis).
- The Subjunctive & Unreal Past: Use formal subjunctive structures (e.g., "*It is crucial that she be informed immediately*") together with unreal past expressions ("*It's high time ...*", "*I'd rather...*").
- Advanced Reporting Verbs: Go beyond "say" and "tell." Correctly use professional reporting verbs that require specific prepositions, infinitives, or gerunds (e.g., *insist on doing*, *encourage someone to do*, *deny doing*, *accuse someone of doing*).

2. Complex Sentence Building

- Advanced Participle Clauses: Use present, past and perfect participle clauses to link ideas and add background information
- Reduced Relative Clauses: Produce more concise, formal noun phrases by reducing relative clauses (e.g., "*The report, compiled by the research team, outlines the risks*").
- Advanced Passive Structures: Use reporting passives (e.g., "*The company is believed to have concealed information*"), impersonal passives, passives with two objects (e.g., "*He was awarded the contract*"), and the "get" passive (e.g., "*He got promoted despite his lack of experience*").



- Nominalisation & Cohesion: Transform verbs and adjectives into noun phrases to create a more objective, formal style (e.g., "*the discovery of...*", "*improvements in...*"). Use cohesive devices (*former, latter, such, so, do, ones*) to produce well-organised writing

3. Precision, Evaluation, & Hedging

- Modal Perfects: Express deduction, criticism, regret and possibility about past events using modal + *have* + past participle (e.g., "*They must have overlooked the warning.*").
- Advanced Adverbials of Attitude: Express degrees of certainty, evaluation and opinion using adverbials (e.g., *Admittedly, Apparently, Frankly, Conceivably, Purportedly, Regrettably, Undoubtedly*).
- Advanced Conditionals: Use mixed conditionals together with inverted conditional structures (e.g., "*Had I known..., Should you require assistance..., Were they to accept the offer...*").
- Hedging: Learn how to sound cautious, polite, and academic by distancing yourself from claims using words like *apparently, arguably, is likely to, it seems that, it appears that, tends to, or modal verbs*.

Lexis

1. Society, Ideas & Global Issues

- The Arts, Literature, & Media: Literary genres, talking about subtext and hidden meanings, allegories, and critiquing artistic expressions.
- Conflict, Geopolitics, & International Relations: Vocabulary for institutional disagreements, social unrest, treaties, and international diplomacy.
- Ethics, Law, & Corporate Responsibility: Ethical dilemmas in business, corporate governance, consumer exploitation, and legal framework vocabulary.
- Human Behaviour, Psychology, & Communication: Subtle personality descriptors, mental health, emotional intelligence, and analysing indirect communication or sarcasm.

2. Lexical Precision

- Advanced Word Formation: Use abstract prefixes and suffixes to alter words. Differentiate between easily confused word families (e.g., *disinterested* vs. *uninterested*, *affect* vs. *effect*).
- Advanced Idioms & Similes: Recognise and use common idiomatic expressions (e.g., *to turn a blind eye*, *to gain the upper hand*, *safe and sound*).
- Dependent Prepositions with Abstract Adjectives (e.g., *compatible with*, *impervious to*, *deficient in*, *reluctant to*).
- Register & Appropriacy: Recognise and use formal, neutral and informal language appropriately according to context. Choose vocabulary and grammatical structures that suit academic, professional and everyday communication.

Phrasal Verbs

Cause & Change

- *bring about*: to cause something to happen
- *come about*: to happen or occur, especially unexpectedly
- *give rise to*: to cause or produce something
- *lead to*: to result in something
- *result in*: to cause a particular outcome
- *stem from*: to originate from or be caused by
- *boil down to*: to have something as the main or most important reason

Research & Analysis

- *bear out*: to show that something is true or correct
- *carry out*: to perform or conduct a task, investigation, or experiment
- *draw on*: to make use of knowledge, experience, or resources
- *follow up on*: to take further action after something has been discussed or discovered
- *look into*: to investigate or examine carefully
- *rule out*: to decide that something is not possible or cannot be true



Discussion & Problem Solving

- *address*: to deal with or discuss an issue
- *back down*: to admit defeat or withdraw a position in an argument
- *back out (of)*: to withdraw from a commitment or agreement before it happens
- *back up*: to support an idea or statement with evidence
- *come up against*: to face difficulties or opposition
- *opt out (of)*: to choose not to participate in something
- *point out*: to draw attention to something
- *put forward*: to suggest an idea or proposal
- *take into account*: to consider something when making a decision
- *tackle*: to deal with a difficult problem
- *work towards*: to make gradual progress towards a goal
- *weigh up*: to carefully consider different options before making a decision

Public Affairs

- *come under scrutiny*: to receive close public or official examination
- *crack down on*: to take strict action against undesirable behaviour
- *phase out*: to gradually stop using or providing something
- *scale back*: to reduce the size or extent of something
- *step up*: to increase the level or intensity of something
- *take over*: to gain control of an organisation, business or responsibility

Progress & Achievement

- *knuckle down*: to begin working hard or focusing intently
- *press on / push on*: to continue moving forward with a task despite difficulties
- *take on*: to accept a difficult challenge or employ someone.
- *end up*: to eventually arrive at a particular state, place, or situation
- *fall short of*: to fail to reach an expected standard



Social Behaviour & Interpersonal Relationships

- *blend in*: to look or behave like everyone else so you aren't noticed
- *bring out*: to highlight or reveal the best qualities in someone or something
- *buy off*: to pay someone money (bribe them) to gain control over a situation
- *hit back*: to defend yourself or respond forcefully to criticism or attack
- *let (someone) off*: to give someone a light punishment or no punishment at all
- *lock up*: to imprison someone or secure a location completely
- *push around*: to bully or force someone to do what you want
- *stand up for*: to defend or protect someone, an opinion, or a cause