

A SELF-ASSESSMENT GUIDE TO LANGUAGE LEVELS

CEFR levels (Common European Framework of Reference) for Languages describe language proficiency in a second language. They are expressed in six levels, from Basic User (A1 and A2) through Independent User (B1 and B2) to Proficient User (C1 and C2). They can be found for all IML courses on the Course Outline.

If you already have experience with the language, but you are not sure about your proficiency level, this Self Assessment Guide may be useful.

All IML Level 1 courses are of CEFR A1 level. They are aimed at learning and revising language essentials. To find your approximate personal level of proficiency, reflect upon what you can already do in the language you wish to study.

If you can answer 'yes' to these questions, you have reached level A1 and are ready for level A2:

- When speaking to people using the language, can you interact in a simple way if the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things more slowly and help you with what you are trying to say? Can you ask and answer simple questions on familiar topics? Can you use simple phrases to describe where you live and people you know?
- Can you understand texts with familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues?
- Can you recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning yourself, your family and immediate surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly?
- Can you write a short, simple message, for example sending holiday greetings? Can you fill in forms with personal details (e.g. your name, nationality, address) on a registration form?

If you can answer 'yes' to these questions, you have probably reached level A2:

- Can you communicate in simple and routine situations on familiar topics and activities? Can you handle very short social exchanges, even though you can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going yourself? Can you use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms your family and other people, living conditions, and your job or studies?
- Can you understand phrases and high-frequency vocabulary on topics such as basic personal and family information, shopping, your local area and employment? Can you catch the main point in short and simple messages?
- Can you read very short, simple texts and personal letters? Can you find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, menus and timetables?
- Can you write short, simple notes and message and write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something?

If you answer 'yes' to these questions, you have probably reached level B1:

- Can you deal with most situations when travelling in an area where the language is spoken? Can you have spontaneous conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or dealing with everyday life? Can you connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions? Can you briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans, tell a story, relate the plot of a book or film and describe your reactions?
- Can you understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters in daily life? Can you understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes when the delivery is relatively slow and clear?
- Can you understand texts that consist mainly of commonly used everyday or job-related language? Can you understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters?
- Can you write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest and personal letters describing experiences and impressions?

If you answer 'yes' to these questions, you have probably reached level B2.

- Can you interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible? Can you actively participate in discussion in familiar contexts? Can you explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the pros and cons of various options? Can you present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to your field of interest? Can you state and argue your opinions?
- Can you understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument on familiar topics? Can you understand most TV news and current affairs programmes, and understand the majority of films?
- Can you read articles and reports about contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints? Can you understand contemporary literary prose?
- Can you write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to your interests? Can you write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons for or against a particular point of view? Can you write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences?

If you wish to pursue your language learning at a higher level, please [contact IML](#) directly.