

Relating GETS Higher to the CEFR

CEFR Global Descriptors		GETS Higher
B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her 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.	Level 6 and above 75/100
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.	Level 4 and above 50/100
A2	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, employment). 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 his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.	Level 2 and above 25/100

UK NARIC has found the GETS Higher English language test awarded by GETS, Qualifications and Assessments International, comparable to at least CEFR B2 standard where a minimum score of 75/100 is achieved, CEFR B1 standard where a minimum score of 50/100 is achieved, and CEFR A2 where a minimum score of 25/100 is achieved.

Context and scope

Global English Testing Services (GETS) is an English Language test provider owned by Qualifications and Assessments International, based in the UK and India. GETS holds a portfolio of seven English proficiency tests including GETS Higher. These tests are available at Authorised Test Centres (ATCs) in over 25 countries across the world. UK NARIC has been commissioned to carry out an independent evaluation which benchmarks GETS Higher against the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) to determine comparability to the CEFR levels A2, B1 and B2. The study employed UK NARIC's established methodology for benchmarking language tests, informed by the Council of

Europe 2009 Manual.¹ The study involved review of assessments, mark schemes, a sample of marked candidate scripts, and audio files from the speaking examinations.

Overview of the GETS Higher

GETS Higher is designed to assess individuals' English language proficiency across the four language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking across everyday social, educational and workplace contexts. The test is designed to support schools, colleges, universities and businesses to understand the English proficiency levels of current or prospective students or

¹ Council of Europe (2009) *Relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment – A Manual*

employees. Test takers can opt to sit the full test consisting of the four skills or choose to be examined in a single skill. The test can be delivered in a paper-based or internet-based format at ATCs. For the speaking assessment, a face-to-face video call with an examiner can be arranged. Each skill is assessed in a single, separate, examination paper. Typical topics and domains are appropriate to a General English test, with input texts increasing in difficulty as the test progresses.

Listening

The GETS Higher listening paper is c.40 minutes and made up of four parts. Each audio text is heard twice and audio is delivered clearly in neutral accents. Candidates demonstrate their understanding of a range of texts such as dialogues, discussions, interviews, lectures, monologues, and presentations through question types including multiple-choice, gap fill, table completion and true/false/not given. Subskills assessed include listening for gist and global comprehension, listening for detail and identifying cues and inferring.

Writing

The writing paper is made up of three different parts, with a duration of 60 minutes. Different output texts are assessed, including a short email, note or personal letter; a summary report of data or graphical information; and an essay outlining arguments, a particular problem, or presenting a justified solution or opinion. Candidates are tested on subskills including the ability to structure texts from different genres, use appropriate registers, thematic development, and careful and accurate selection of lexis and grammatical structures.

Speaking

In the assessment for speaking, which takes 12-14 minutes, candidates are tested across five tasks. Tasks cover varying interaction patterns, including interviews, presentations, descriptions of images and a guided discussion on personal, general and familiar topics. Spoken interaction is assessed through a guided question and answer format. Candidates are expected to demonstrate a range of speaking subskills including their ability to produce extended and fluent spoken text; produce accurate phonological models; select

appropriate lexis and structures; and expand and develop their ideas.

Reading

Reading skills are assessed in a 60-minute paper divided into five parts. A range of question types are included such as gapped text, multiple matching, multiple-choice questions, and true/false/not given questions. Input texts increase in complexity with early tasks based on general, short articles and later tasks requiring synthesis of multiple texts or more complex technical articles based on less familiar topics. Candidates are expected to demonstrate subskills in reading for detail, global understanding of texts, identifying cues and inferring, and understanding both explicit and implicit meaning.

Assessment, Grading and Certification

Candidates receive a report presenting their GETS Score, expressed as a mark out of 100. Raw scores for each skill are converted to the GETS levels 1 to 7, which are aligned by GETS to the CEFR in the GETS Scale of English as in the table below. Each skill is weighted at 25%.

GETS Scale of English

GETS Score	GETS Scale
90-100	Level 7
81-89	Level 6
75-80	
65-74	Level 5
58-64	Level 4
50-57	
40-49	Level 3
25-39	Level 2
15-24	Level 1
1-14	Unclassified

Conclusions

Overall, the GETS Higher was found to provide an appropriate test of general English with sufficient documentation and mechanisms in place to enable conclusions to be drawn on the comparable CEFR levels of the reading, writing, listening and speaking papers at CEFR A2, B1 and B2.