

GATEHOUSE
AWARDS



B2-C2 Handbook

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CONTENTS

ABOUT the TIE B2-C2 Exam	2
OVERVIEW of the TIE B2-C2 Exam	4
STRUCTURE of the TIE B2-C2 Exam	5
• The TIE B2-C2 SPOKEN Exam	6
• ASSESSING the TIE SPOKEN Exam	7
• The TIE B2-C2 WRITTEN Exam	8
• ASSESSING the TIE WRITTEN Exam	9
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS	10
SAMPLE Logbooks	13
SAMPLE WRITTEN Exam Booklets	14



ABOUT THE TIE B2-C2 EXAM

Description

TIE - Test of Interactive English consists of a suite of 6 qualifications, mapped to the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

TIE - Test of Interactive English is an integrated 4-skills test of language ability, consisting of 2 exam components, within which the candidate's Speaking, Reading, Writing, Listening and Interactive skills are assessed.

The assessment of each qualification consists of 2 mandatory exam components at the corresponding level:

- Spoken TIE Exam
- Written TIE Exam

CEFR	Qualification Title	TIE Exam
A1	GA Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Test of Interactive English) (Entry 1): 603/0084/X	TIE A1-B1 Exam: Spoken TIE Written TIE
A2	GA Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Test of Interactive English) (Entry 2): 603/0085/1	
B1	GA Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Test of Interactive English) (Entry 3): 603/0086/3	
B2	GA Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International (Test of Interactive English): 603/0087/5	TIE B2-C2 Exam: Spoken TIE Written TIE
C1	GA Level 2 Certificate in ESOL International (Test of Interactive English): 603/0088/7	
C2	GA Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International (Test of Interactive English): 603/0089/9	

The TIE qualifications allow Candidates to re-take the exam for each individual component of the qualification. Each component within each qualification is weighted equally.

This Handbook contains detailed guidance and information about the TIE B2-C2 Exam.

For guidance and information about the TIE A1-B1 Exam, please refer to the TIE Exams A1-B1 Handbook.

OFQUAL Recognition (Regulatory Status)

The TIE - Test of Interactive English qualifications are regulated by OFQUAL (Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation) and awarded by Gatehouse Awards Ltd in the United Kingdom.

They are valid, trusted and accepted by employers, colleges and universities, as well as government authorities and institutions worldwide.

Support Materials

A wide range of support materials are published online at www.tieexams.com, including the TIE Exam Handbooks, sample exams and past papers.

Innovation

TIE promotes the use of authentic material, selected by the candidate. The Spoken and Written TIE exams incorporate tasks for which candidates can prepare before the exam date, choosing topics and texts of their personal interest.

TIE adopts a unique approach to language testing in which Speaking, Reading, Listening, Writing and Interactive Skills are considered to be inter-related: the receptive language skills support and underlie the productive skills – much as they tend to do in real life.

Exam Structure

The TIE B2-C2 exam consists of 2 components:

- Spoken TIE Exam: assesses interactive Speaking and Listening skills.
- Written TIE Exam: assesses interactive Reading and Writing skills.

Assessment

In TIE, candidates receive a grade that corresponds to a level of language proficiency based on the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). Their performance in the exam determines which CEFR level they have achieved. Candidates are then awarded a certificate indicating the level of qualification they have achieved.

TIE Availability

TIE Exams are offered in both paper-based and online formats through:

- TIE General Examinations (paper-based and online)
- TIE On Demand Examinations for partner schools

TIE exams are available internationally and are held throughout the year.

Re-Sit & Second Chance

Re-Sit Exams

Candidates who do not achieve their target level on either the Spoken or Written TIE exam component of the exam are eligible for one free re-sit within 6 months.

This re-sit covers only the exam component (Spoken or Written) in which the candidate did not reach the level they aimed for on their first attempt.

Second Chance

If a candidate does not achieve their target level in both the Spoken and Written TIE exam components, they can retake the full exam a second time within 2 months at a reduced cost.

If the candidate does not use their Second Chance offer within the 2-month timeframe, they will be awarded the qualification they achieved at their initial exam.

OVERVIEW OF THE TIE B2-C2 EXAM

Spoken TIE Exam	Written TIE Exam
<p>Candidates are examined in pairs (or groups of 3 in case of an odd number of candidates).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exam duration for 2 candidates: approx. 25 minutes• Exam duration for 3 candidates: approx. 35 minutes	<p>Candidates are required to complete 2 tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writing Task 1: Write a text based on their News Story.• Writing Task 2: Write a text based on their Book. <p>Total duration: 90 minutes</p> <p>The use of a monolingual (English-English) dictionary is permitted (*not permitted in the TIE online Exam).</p>

The 2 components (Written & Spoken TIE Exam) are compulsory for each candidate and are held on the same day.

Before the Exam Day: Preparation

To prepare for the TIE B2-C2 Exam, the candidate must complete a Logbook containing the following materials:

- **Investigation:** The candidate prepares an investigation on a topic of their choice, including additional areas of interest, questions, themes, or ideas related to their investigation topic.
- **Book:** The candidate reads a book, writes a summary of their book, and records further analysis, commentary, or discussion about their book.
- **News Story:** The candidate writes a summary of a news story they have read and records further analysis, commentary, or discussion about their news story.

Preparation of the Logbook is a mandatory requirement.

On the Day of the Exam

The candidate must bring a copy of their completed Logbook with them on the day of the exam.

Candidates are able to refer to their Logbook throughout the exam accordingly:

- Spoken TIE Exam
 - Presentation & discussion of their Investigation by each candidate
 - Presentation & discussion of either the Book or News Story by each candidate
- Written TIE Exam
 - Production of a text based on the Book
 - Production of a text based on the News Story

Candidates with Additional Needs

The TIE exams are designed to be accessible and inclusive.

Learners with particular needs may be eligible for Reasonable Adjustments - these are arrangements that can be made to take account of disability or learning difficulty without compromising the validity and integrity of the exam and qualification.

For example, candidates with dyslexia, dysgraphia or mobility problems affecting their ability to write may be entitled to sit their written exam with the help of a scribe (or additional time for the TIE online exam).

Candidates affected by unforeseen circumstances on the day of the exam, which may affect their ability to complete their exam, may also be eligible for Special Consideration.

STRUCTURE OF THE TIE B2-C2 EXAM

TIE B2-C2 Spoken Exam (Speaking & Listening)

Stage	Activity	Description	Time
1. Personal Introductions	Introductions, exchange of personal information	Each candidate introduces him/herself and answers personal questions from the Interlocutor.	4 minutes (for 2 candidates) 5-6 minutes (for 3 candidates)
2. Investigation	Presentation and discussion of Investigations	Each candidate presents his/her Investigation and answers questions from the Interlocutor and the other candidate(s).	8-9 minutes (for 2 candidates) 12-13 minutes (for 3 candidates)
3. The News Story	Presentation and discussion of the News Story	One candidate presents his/her News Story and answers questions from the Interlocutor and the other candidate(s).	5-6 minutes
4. The Book	Presentation and discussion of the Book	One candidate presents his/her Book and answers questions from the Interlocutor and the other candidate(s).	5-6 minutes
Total exam duration			approx. 25 minutes (for 2 candidates) approx. 35 minutes (for 3 candidates)

TIE Spoken Exam STAGE 1: PERSONAL INTRODUCTIONS

- **Activity:** Exchange of personal information.
- **Time:** 4 min approx.
- **Task description:** The Interlocutor invites the candidates to introduce themselves and answer questions.
- **Materials:** none.
- **Example questions:**
 - Where do you live? / Do you like your town/city/ neighbourhood? Is there anything you would like to change about your town/ city/ neighbourhood?
 - Why are you learning English?
 - What are your plans for the future?
 - What do you like doing in your free time?

TIE Spoken Exam STAGE 2: THE INVESTIGATION

- **Activity:** Presentation and discussion of Investigations (all candidates).
- **Time:** 8-9 min approx.
- **Task description:** Candidates present their Investigations for at least 2 minutes each and respond to questions asked by the Interlocutor and their co-candidate.

TIE Spoken Exam STAGE 3: THE NEWS STORY

- **Activity:** Presentation and discussion of the News Story.
- **Time:** 5-6 min approx.
- **Task description:** One of the candidates presents his/her News Story for at least 2 minutes and responds to questions asked by the Interlocutor and their co-candidate.

TIE Spoken Exam STAGE 4: THE BOOK

- **Activity:** Presentation and discussion of the Book.
- **Time:** 5-6 min approx.
- **Task description:** One of the candidates presents his/her Book for at least 2 minutes and responds to questions asked by the Interlocutor and their co-candidate.

ASSESSING THE SPOKEN TIE EXAM

The examiners assess the candidates' performance based on specific criteria:

- **Aural Reception (Listening)** measures the candidate's ability to process the spoken input of the other speakers (i.e., listening for gist, specific information, detailed understanding, implications, etc.).
- **Interaction** refers to the candidate's ability to interact with his/her partner and the Examiner.
- **Communicative Effectiveness** refers to the candidate's ability to convey his/her message.
- **Grammatical Accuracy & Complexity** refers to the candidate's grammatical & syntactical control.
- **Lexical Range & Appropriacy** measures the candidate's lexical repertoire and ability to make appropriate lexical choices.
- **Phonological Control** measures the candidate's ability to produce comprehensible speech.

Based on the criteria above, candidates are graded on a scale from B2 to C2 or below according to their performance. Candidates who are graded as below B2 are re-assessed at B1 and may be awarded a B1 grade as a fallback grade. The criteria have been mapped to level descriptors in the scales of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

Spoken TIE B2-C2: Assessment Criteria						
Level	Aural Reception	Interaction	Communicative Effectiveness	Grammatical Accuracy & Complexity	Lexical Range & Appropriacy	Phonological Control
C2+	The descriptor below is met fully and consistently across every task.	The descriptor below is met fully and consistently across every task.	The descriptor below is met fully and consistently across every task.	The descriptor below is met fully and consistently across every task.	The descriptor below is met fully and consistently across every task.	The descriptor below is met fully and consistently across every task.
C2	Can participate in any conversation without any difficulty in understanding any kind of language delivered at fast native speech.	Can take part effortlessly in any conversation. Can adopt almost entirely appropriate register. Can naturally interweave his/her contribution into the joint discourse.	Can express self fluently and spontaneously at length with a natural, effortless flow. Can convey meaning flexibly and precisely. Can backtrack and restructure around a difficulty so smoothly that the interlocutor is hardly aware of it.	Can maintain consistent grammatical control of complex language, even when attention is otherwise engaged (e.g. forward planning or monitoring the reactions of others). Errors are extremely rare.	Can use a broad range of vocabulary flexibly and appropriately to address unfamiliar, abstract topics and ideas and convey finer shades of meaning without ambiguity. Has a very good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms.	Can consistently maintain a high level of comprehensibility. Can express fine shades of meaning by varying intonation & stress. Flow is natural, effortless and unhesitating. Pauses only to reflect on the precise way to express meaning.
C1+	Can follow extended speech on abstract and complex topics without difficulty.	Can converse comfortably and appropriately. Can formulate ideas with precision and skillfully relate his/her contribution to those of other speakers.	Can express self fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can develop ideas at length with subsidiary details, reasons & relevant examples. Can use appropriate & effective circumlocution.	Displays a high degree of grammatical control. Can produce complex speech in which errors are rare and difficult to spot.	Can use a broad lexical repertoire to deal with unfamiliar, abstract topics, gaps are readily and effortlessly overcome by circumlocution. Good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms.	Can maintain a high level of comprehensibility. Can vary intonation and sentence stress appropriately to convey and enhance meaning. Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural smooth flow.
C1	Can understand enough to follow extended speech on abstract and complex topics though he/she may have to confirm occasional details, especially if the accent is unfamiliar.	Can interact easily. Can adopt a register that is generally appropriate & consistently maintained. Can handle turns appropriately, e.g., using fillers and thinking words.	Can express self spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.	Can use complex structures successfully to express what he/she wants to say, without restriction. Errors are infrequent and do not interfere with intelligibility.	Can use a wide range of vocabulary mostly appropriately to deal with unfamiliar, abstract topics. Little obvious searching for words. Has a good grasp of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. Occasional minor slips occur but no significant vocabulary errors.	Can maintain comprehensibility which is only occasionally marred by phonological lapses. Can usually vary intonation & sentence stress appropriately for the message.
B2+	Can understand main ideas and details in standard spoken language on both concrete and abstract topics.	Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity in familiar contexts, accounting for, justifying and sustaining views.	Can communicate spontaneously and clearly on a wide range of topics, using the language fluently, accurately and effectively without much sign of having to restrict what he/she wants to say. Will use stock phrases rather than pauses to gain time and keep the turn.	Displays very good grammatical control of simple and more complex structures. Occasional 'slips' or non-systematic errors and minor flaws in sentence structure may still occur, but they are rare and can often be self-corrected.	Can deploy a good range of appropriate vocabulary to address a wide range of topics without much conspicuous searching for words. Can vary formulation to avoid frequent repetition even in complex sentence forms. Lexical gaps can still cause hesitation but this does not hinder communication.	Can generally maintain comprehensibility using appropriate intonation and placing sentence stress accurately and naturally. Stretches of language contain little hesitation.
B2	Can understand main ideas of complex speech on both familiar and unfamiliar topics.	Can interact with a degree of ease & spontaneity without imposing strain on participants. Can demonstrate some ability to use appropriate register to give clear descriptions and viewpoints in familiar contexts. Can participate appropriately in conversation.	Can communicate spontaneously, using the language almost fluently and effectively on a wide range of topics. Can account for & sustain views clearly with relevant supporting arguments. Uses a good degree of confidence, politeness and clarity.	Displays a very good control of simple and some complex grammar. Errors do occur but do not lead to misunderstanding.	Can deploy a good range of appropriate vocabulary to address matters connected to his/her field and most general matters. Limitations may exist when dealing with unfamiliar or abstract topics, but messages clearly come across.	Can generally maintain comprehensibility showing some control of rhythm & appropriate intonation. Produces stretches of language with a fairly even tempo. However, there are a few instances of pausing and hesitation to search for patterns and expressions, which do not affect communication.
Fallback Assessment						
B1+	Can understand straightforward factual information about common everyday or job-related topics, identifying both general messages and specific details, though will sometimes have to ask for repetition of particular words and phrases.	Can generally maintain a conversation. Can enter unprepared into conversations on familiar topics.	Can express self with relative ease on topics of immediate relevance. Can explain the main points in an idea or problem with reasonable precision and without much misunderstanding.	Can communicate with reasonable accuracy in familiar contexts. Generally good control though with noticeable mother tongue influence. Errors occur, but messages come across clearly.	Has a sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself on most topics pertinent to his /her everyday life.	Can express self reasonably clearly despite some problems with rhythm & intonation, & occasional inappropriate pausing.
B1	Can understand main points of clear, standard speech about common everyday or job-related topics, provided speech is clearly articulated in a general familiar context.	Can interact with some confidence only when dealing with familiar topics. Can participate in such conversation.	Can convey a simple & straightforward message of immediate relevance, getting across most important messages. There are however cases of misunderstanding.	Can communicate with reasonable accuracy & control within the limits of frequently used patterns.	Can use simple vocabulary flexibly. Makes inappropriate word choices in less familiar situations which however do not seriously impede communication.	Is mostly comprehensible and has some control of phonological features. Mispronunciations occur as well as instances of inappropriate pausing.
Below B1 (FAIL)	Can understand phrases and expressions on very basic personal information, provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated.	Can interact only in structured contexts keeping the conversation going only with the help of an interlocutor.	Can pass on the relevant message in a simple & direct exchange of limited information on personal & concrete matters. More complex messages may be compromised, leading to frequent misunderstanding.	Can produce speech that shows some control of short simple structures. Errors often obscure meaning.	Can deploy basic vocabulary more or less appropriately managing to convey a simple message.	Is generally comprehensible despite limited control of phonological features, excessive hesitation & inappropriate pausing.

STRUCTURE OF THE TIE B2-C2 EXAM

TIE B2-C2 Written Exam (Reading & Writing)

Activity	Description
Writing Task 1	<p>The candidate is presented with 2 questions. The candidate is expected to select 1 of the questions and answer it in reference to the News Story they have read.</p> <p>Text types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• email or letter• essay <p>Length of texts per level of examination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• B2: approx. 150 words• C1: approx. 200 words• C2: approx. 250 words
Writing Task 2	<p>The candidate is presented with 2 questions. The candidate is expected to select 1 of the questions and answer it in reference to the Book they have read.</p> <p>Text types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• review• article <p>Length of texts per level of examination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• B2: approx. 150 words• C1: approx. 200 words• C2: approx. 250 words
Total exam duration: 90 minutes	

ASSESSING THE WRITTEN TIE EXAM

Markers assess the candidates' performance based on the following criteria:

- **Visual Reception (Reading)** measures the degree of the candidate's understanding as well as the extent to which their background reading is successfully displayed in their produced scripts.
- **Production & Text Organisation** measures the candidate's ability to produce clear, well-structured and coherent text, following the genre conventions set in the task.
- **Task Achievement** assesses how appropriately, effectively and relevantly the candidate responds to the tasks set
- **Grammatical Accuracy & Complexity** refers to the candidate's grammatical & syntactical control
- **Lexical Range and Appropriacy** measures the candidate's lexical repertoire and ability to make appropriate lexical choices
- **Orthographic Control & Punctuation** assesses the candidate's control of the conventions of spelling and punctuation.

Based on the criteria above, candidates are graded on a scale from B2 to C2 or below according to their performance. Candidates who are graded as below B2 are re-assessed at B1 and may be awarded a B1 grade as a fallback grade. The criteria have been mapped to the level descriptors in the scales of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

Written TIE B2-C2: Assessment Criteria						
Level	Visual Reception	Task Achievement	Grammatical Accuracy & Complexity	Lexical Range & Appropriacy	Orthographic Control & Punctuation	Production & Text Organisation
C2+	As C2: consistently and to a high degree throughout both entire tasks.	As C2: consistently and to a high degree throughout both entire tasks.	As C2: consistently and to a high degree throughout both entire tasks	As C2: consistently and to a high degree throughout both entire tasks.	As C2: consistently and to a high degree throughout both entire tasks.	As C2: consistently and to a high degree throughout both entire tasks.
C2	Displays a high degree of comprehension. Text skillfully integrates the writer's background reading and critical thinking.	Fully appropriate text that answers the question fully and convincingly, showing the candidate's critical perspective. The text is likely to have a positive effect on the intended audience.	Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical control of complex language. Great flexibility in reformulating ideas in differing forms to convey finer shades of meaning precisely. Errors are extremely rare and unobtrusive.	Uses a very broad and sophisticated lexical repertoire in a skillful manner. Displays natural control of idiomatic expressions and colloquialism and shows clear awareness of connotative levels of meaning.	Spelling and punctuation are consistently accurate. Errors are extremely rare.	Produces clear, smoothly flowing, complex texts. Skillfully manages paragraphing and shows a high degree of independence in text organisation. Uses a variety of organisational patterns and a wide range of appropriate linking devices to mark the relationships between ideas in a coherent and cohesive discourse. The text meets the required word limit for C2.
C1+	Displays a high degree of comprehension. Text is effectively linked to task instructions showing the writer's critical perspective.	Fully appropriate text that answers the question thoroughly. Covers potential topic points in a detailed and critical manner.	Shows natural control of complex grammatical structures. Errors are rare and difficult to spot and do not impede understanding. Choice of grammar consistently shows full awareness of register.	Uses a wide range of vocabulary with flexibility and precision. Displays fairly good awareness of style, collocation and idiomaticity. Slips are very rare. Choice of lexis consistently shows full awareness of register.	Spelling and punctuation are accurate apart from occasional slips of the pen.	Produces coherent texts on complex subjects. Layout and paragraphing are appropriately used and effectively managed. Shows controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and linking devices, which inform paragraph structure.
C1	Displays a high degree of comprehension. Text is appropriately and effectively linked to task instructions. Some evidence of critical thinking.	Fully appropriate text that answers the question fully. Covers relevant topic points effectively, providing a range of arguments and examples.	Maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy. Errors are difficult to spot and do not impede understanding. Choice of grammar shows strong awareness of register.	Uses a wide range of vocabulary allowing for some flexibility and precision in expression. Displays good command of idiomatic expressions and collocation with only occasional minor slips. Choice of lexis shows strong awareness of register.	Spelling and punctuation are mostly accurate. Errors are uncommon and do not affect meaning.	Produces well-structured complex texts underlining the relevant salient issues, expanding and supporting points of view. Uses a wide range of appropriate linking words effectively to link ideas within and across sentences. Produces coherent text with clear sequenced paragraphs. The text meets the required word limit for C1.
B2+	Displays a very good degree of comprehension. Text is clearly and appropriately linked to task instructions.	An appropriate text that answers the question fully. Covers relevant topic points in an appropriate manner, expressing relevant arguments or examples clearly.	Shows a good grammatical control of complex language. Non-systematic errors and minor flaws in sentence structure still occur but they are rare and do not obstruct understanding. Choice of grammar shows considerable awareness of register.	Uses a very good range of vocabulary. Words, phrases and expressions are fully appropriate and fully convey meaning. Lexical accuracy is generally high. Choice of lexis shows considerable awareness of register.	Spelling and punctuation are reasonably accurate. Few errors that do not affect meaning.	Produces clearly intelligible continuous writing. Ideas and information are logically organised in appropriate paragraphing. Uses a variety of linking words to mark clearly the relationships between ideas.
B2	Displays a good degree of comprehension. Text is clearly linked to task instructions.	An appropriate text that answers the question almost fully. Content is mostly relevant, providing some arguments and examples. The response follows the required text type and purpose.	Shows a relatively good grammatical control of complex language. Although there are still some errors, they usually do not affect understanding. Choice of grammar shows some awareness of register.	Uses a good range of vocabulary that is appropriate to the task topic and purpose. Rare lapses in word choice. Incorrect word choices which occur do not hinder communication. Choice of lexis shows some awareness of register.	Spelling and punctuation are reasonably accurate but may show signs of mother-tongue interference. Errors are unobtrusive.	Produces intelligible continuous writing which follows expected paragraphing and layout. Uses a variety of linking devices correctly and, in most cases, appropriately to create a coherent and cohesive text. The text meets the required word limit for B2.

Fallback Assessment						
B1+	Displays a level of basic comprehension of the task below the B2 level: Text must still be linked to task instructions but in a general way.	There is a noticeable attempt at addressing the topic in question, but the response mostly consists of a summary. Limited or no evidence of relevance to text type and/or purpose. - Content lacks specific arguments and examples.	Simple structures are consistently employed appropriately. Attempts at more complex language use are more or less successful but the range of structures is limited and does not display the range and accuracy expected at B2 level.	Candidate's vocabulary range is appropriate and accurate when using familiar language, with errors occurring when attempting to communicate more abstract ideas or use technical or complex vocabulary.	There are very few or no spelling or punctuation errors in familiar and everyday vocabulary and text. Errors occur when attempting to use technical or complex language.	Produces a connected text by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence. Paragraphing is used mostly appropriately and effectively. Simple cohesive devices are used to link sentences. There are clear paragraphs including introduction, development and conclusion in a coherent and cohesive text.
B1	Displays basic understanding of the task questions: Text must still be linked to task instructions.	There is a limited attempt at addressing the task topic; the response mostly consists of a summary. Limited or no evidence of relevance to text type and/or purpose. - Content lacks specific arguments and examples.	A relatively good repertoire of simple structures is evident and employed appropriately. Errors are noticeable but do not seriously interfere with intended meaning. Some forms of expression are awkward.	Vocabulary range is appropriate when using familiar language. Lapses in word choice do not interfere with meaning when using very familiar or everyday language. Interference is apparent when attempting vocabulary above the level.	Spelling and punctuation are accurate enough to be followed most of the time. Errors when trying to use language above the level affect meaning.	Paragraphing is used mostly appropriately and effectively. Uses a range of simple linking devices to link sentences to make coherent and cohesive text. The text fails to meet the required word limit for B2, but exceeds 100 words.
FAIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The text is written on a totally different topic than the one assigned. • The text requires considerable effort to see any connection between the composition and the prompt. • The text consists of summary only and there is no connection to other elements of the task topic. 		Lack of grammatical control consistently interferes with the reader's ability to understand the intended meaning.	The vocabulary range is insufficient to convey meaning effectively.	Spelling and punctuation errors are frequent and interfere with the reader's ability to understand the intended meaning.	The use of paragraphing is very limited or non-existent. There is very limited or no attempt to create text which is coherent and / or cohesive.
DNF	A DNF (Did Not Fulfill the Requirements) rating is awarded to a candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that has not attempted answering the task (either WT1 or WT2 or both) • that has produced a written response that is shorter than 100 words 					

Glossary of terms used within the written assessment criteria:

- Text type: a letter/email, article, essay, etc.
- Text purpose: argumentative, descriptive, informative, persuasive, etc.
- Register: the level of formality of the text.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

THE CANDIDATE'S LOGBOOK

What is the Candidate's Logbook? The Candidate's Logbook contains the necessary materials (i.e., Investigation, Book and News Story), which the candidate is required to prepare in advance of the exam day. The candidates must have their Logbooks with them on the day of the exam.

Is the Candidate's Logbook mandatory? YES, the Candidate's Logbook is mandatory for both exam parts (Written & Spoken Exam).

Is the Candidate's Logbook assessed in the examination? NO, the Candidate's Logbook is NOT assessed or awarded a grade.

Should the Candidate's Logbook be hand written or typed? Both are allowed. Candidates may choose the most convenient format for them.

THE SPOKEN TIE EXAM

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Should the candidate be prepared to introduce him/herself? YES, but s/he should also be ready to answer personal questions. At the higher levels, the examiner may ask candidates to ask each other one or more personal questions.

Does the examiner ask candidates questions? YES, the examiner asks each candidate a few personal questions about their life, hobbies, studies, work, etc.

THE INVESTIGATION

Can an entire class prepare an investigation based on the same topic? NO, teachers should NOT permit an entire class to prepare an investigation based on the same topic. Students should be encouraged to choose different investigation topics.

Should the candidate pay attention to the other candidate's presentation? YES, the Spoken TIE Exam is interaction based. Candidates should be attentive listeners as they will be requested to ask questions and comment on the other candidate's presentation.

THE BOOK

What types of books are accepted? Any type of book - fiction, non-fiction or a graded reader. Compilations or anthologies are allowed, but we recommend that the candidate focuses on one story. English coursebooks or magazines are NOT permitted.

Are non-English books permitted? NO, only books in English are permitted. Candidates who have based their preparation on a non-English book will be awarded DNF (Did Not Fulfill Requirements).

Should the candidate choose a book at the level s/he aims at? The level or difficulty of the book is not assessed in the exam. Therefore, the candidates are free to choose any book they like. However, they need to be satisfied that the content of their book will allow them to demonstrate their language abilities required at their target level. For this reason, it is suggested that the book they choose to read is either at the level they register for or one level lower than that.

Can an entire class read the same book? NO, teachers should NOT permit an entire class to use the same book. Students should be encouraged to choose different books.

Should the candidate pay attention to his/her co-candidate's book presentation? YES, the Spoken TIE Exam is interaction based. Candidates should be attentive listeners as they will be requested to ask questions and comment on their partner's presentation.

THE NEWS STORY

Can the News Story come from the Internet? YES.

Should the candidate pay attention to the other candidate's presentation? YES, the Spoken TIE Exam is interaction based. Candidates should be attentive listeners as they will be requested to ask questions and comment on their partner's presentation.

Can an entire class prepare the same News Story? NO, teachers should NOT permit an entire class to follow the same news story. Students should be encouraged to choose different news stories.

How should the candidate choose his/her News Story? Candidates may choose any News Story they wish provided that it is not older than 12 months from the exam date.

THE WRITTEN TIE EXAM

Can the candidates use a dictionary during the Written TIE Exam? YES, the use of a monolingual (English-English) dictionary is permitted (Note: this is NOT permitted in the TIE online exam).

Can the candidates consult their Logbooks during the Written TIE Exam? YES.

ASSESSMENT

What is the pass mark for the TIE Examination? There is no pass mark. In each exam component (Spoken and Written Exam), the candidates are assessed and evaluated according to assessment criteria mapped to the CEFR descriptors and are awarded a grade from B1 to C2 based on their performance. A "Fail" outcome is only recorded when a candidate falls below the minimum requirements to be awarded a B1 level qualification.

What is the role of the "+" grade in the marking process? Where the candidate has demonstrated that skills are fully established across all criteria at the level and there is a clear indication that skills at the level above may be emerging, but not yet consolidated, a grade with a "+" may be given. In other words, the "+" grade indicates half a level. The final Written and Spoken Exam grade is based on the average of 6 different marks, corresponding to the 6 assessment criteria used in TIE.

Example of Spoken Grade:

Spoken Criterion	Grade	
Aural reception	C1	Overall Spoken Grade: C1
Interaction	C1	
Communicative Effectiveness	B2+	
Grammatical accuracy	B2+	
Lexical range	B2+	
Phonological control	C1	

How is the overall final grade calculated? A half-level difference between the Spoken and Written exam overall grades is automatically rounded up. A full level difference results in the lower of the two outcomes being awarded as the final grade.

The following table shows how the Spoken and Written grades are used to calculate the overall final grade.

Spoken TIE Grade	Written TIE Grade	Final Overall Grade
B2	B1+	B2
B2	B1	B1
C1+	B2	B2
C1+	B2+	C1
C1	B2	B2
C1	B2+	C1
C2	B2	B2
C2	B2+	C1
C2	C1	C1
C2	C1+	C2
C2+	C1+	C2
C2+	C1	C1

SAMPLE LOGBOOKS

TIE EXAM B2-C2 CANDIDATE'S LOGBOOK

Part 1: Candidate's Personal Information

NAME	
SURNAME	
FATHER'S NAME	
NAME IN LOCAL LANGUAGE	
SURNAME IN LOCAL LANGUAGE	
DATE OF BIRTH	
LEVEL YOU AIM AT	<input type="checkbox"/> B2 <input type="checkbox"/> C1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C2

Part 2: Candidate's Preparation

Investigation

- **2.1 Summary:** Provide a summary of your Investigation (B2, C1, C2: minimum 200 words).
- **2.2 Questions:** Answer 3 questions about your Investigation in 50-100 words per question (all levels).

News Story

- **2.3 Summary:** Provide a summary of your News Story (B2: approx. 150 words, C1: approx. 200 words, C2: approx. 250 words).
- **2.4 Questions:** Answer 3 questions about your News Story in 50-100 words per question (all levels).

Book

- **2.5 Summary:** Provide a summary of your Book (B2: approx. 150 words, C1: approx. 200 words, C2: approx. 250 words).
- **2.6 Questions:** Answer 3 questions about your Book in 50-100 words per question (all levels).

1

2.1: Investigation

Provide a summary of your Investigation (B2, C1, C2: minimum 200 words).

Investigation Title: Castells of Catalonia

The Castells of Catalonia are a unique and awe-inspiring cultural tradition that has deep roots in the north-eastern region of Spain. The word "Castell" is used to describe human towers up to ten stories high, sometimes containing hundreds of participants. These human towers, recognized as an important cultural practice by UNESCO, combine athleticism, coordination, and teamwork. Tourists from all over the world now flock to witness these breathtaking events.

The history of Castells dates back over two centuries. Castells are built by teams which consist of participants of all ages, from children to adults. Each Castell is meticulously planned and executed, with the ultimate goal of constructing the tallest and most stable human tower possible. Many towns and cities in Catalonia have their own Castell teams, and competitions are held throughout the year to determine the best and most skilled teams.

The structure of a Castell typically begins with a solid base, formed by the strongest and most experienced participants. As the tower rises, the upper levels become progressively smaller, with the top generally featuring a young child, who must climb to the summit and raise their hand. This moment signifies the successful completion of the tower. It is not unusual for a Castell to collapse. This is why the participants devote much of their preparation to safely managing such collapses, and the youngest members must wear protective headgear.

The Castells are not just a physical spectacle but a powerful representation of human achievement, solidarity, and cultural heritage that continues to thrive in Catalonia today.



2.2: Questions

Answer 3 questions about your Investigation in 50-100 words per question (all levels).

1. Why did you choose to investigate this topic?

On my travels in Spain last year, I had the privilege of witnessing the Castells and it was certainly a sight to behold. We stumbled upon a local festival quite by accident, and were astounded to see a towering construction made up of hundreds of people. I can tell you that it certainly grabbed my attention! I was captivated, and have been meaning to learn more about the tradition ever since. This seemed the perfect opportunity to delve a little deeper and get to know more about the practice.

2. What is the most surprising thing you have learnt from your investigation?

Although Castells have been performed since the 1700s, women have only recently been allowed to participate. It wasn't until the 1980s that teams became mixed sex. In some respects, it's not that surprising; the world has often been slow to recognize what women have to offer! On the upside, the inclusion of women is widely acknowledged as having facilitated a new golden age of Castell building, as the towers are now higher and stronger than ever before.

3. Which part of the investigation would you like to share with your friends?

I think the part that would appeal to my friends most is the community aspect of this practice. It is very inclusive and aimed to bring people together, because neighbours of all ages can participate and have their role. It encourages people from different generations and background to come together for a common purpose. My friends and I really value community spirit, and think it's important to have things that connect you to other people around you. It's particularly relevant nowadays, when people tend to lead quite isolated lives, and rely on technology more than on human connection.

2

2.3: News Story

Provide a summary of your News Story.
(B2: approx. 150 words, C1: approx. 200 words, C2: approx. 250 words)

Title: Danish Man Visits Every Country Without Flying

Source: <https://newsforkids.net/articles/2023/09/07/danish-man-visits-every-country-without-flying/> (accessed 7th September 2023)



Thor Pedersen, a Danish traveller, achieved a remarkable feat by visiting every country in the world without flying. His journey spanned nearly 10 years and covered about 260,000 miles. Thor set out on this adventure after reading about someone who had visited every country, and decided to create his own record, with some strict rules in place: no flying, no returning home, and spending at least 24 hours in each country.

Thor's initial challenge was how to manage his limited budget efficiently. This was particularly tricky at the start of his journey, in Europe. However, as he moved to other parts of the world, his journey became increasingly challenging for other reasons. As he had resolved not to use air travel, Thor had to rely on boats to cross large bodies of water. His modes of travel also included taxis, buses, trains, walking, cargo containers, and even crowded trucks. Accommodation ranged from paying for hotels and hostels, to the generosity of strangers who allowed Thor to stay in their homes completely free of charge. Thor also recounted having to spend some nights under the stars!

During his journey, Thor encountered various hardships, such as being held at gunpoint and suffering from severe malaria. Thankfully, he also experienced many acts of kindness from people worldwide. Despite facing numerous obstacles, including a two-year delay in Hong Kong due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Thor persevered.

In May, Thor completed his remarkable quest in the Maldives, and in July 2023, he returned to Denmark after a 33-day boat journey. Upon his arrival in Denmark, he was greeted by his family and friends, which was a very emotional experience. He plans to reflect on his journey, write a book, and share the valuable lessons he learned during his extraordinary global odyssey.

2.4: Questions

Answer 3 questions about your News Story in 50-100 words per question (all levels).

1. Why did you decide to read this news story?

I've always been fascinated by people who are not afraid to take on a challenge, and visiting every country on Earth without flying is certainly one of the most challenging undertakings I've ever heard of! I was also hoping this article would expand my knowledge of the world, and I wasn't disappointed. Due to my circumstances, I haven't been able to travel in recent years, so I thought reading this article would present an excellent opportunity for me to expand my horizons from the comfort of my own home, and it certainly provided me with some food for thought as well.

2. What has this news story taught you about life?

Even though the original article didn't mention the environmental aspect of Thor not using air travel, this is what really stood out to me. It's really important for people to consider the impact of their actions on the environment. In my experience, people tend to assume that addressing environmental issues is the responsibility of the governments and large corporations. In reality, this is an excuse, and the man in this article was the perfect example that we are all capable of making adjustments to the way we live which are going to have real and positive effect on the world.

3. Why do you think other people should read this news story?

This article is very thought provoking. When you read about Thor and the obstacles he had to overcome during his journey, it makes you stop and ask yourself some valid questions about your own approach to life. For example, do I give up too easily when faced with difficulties? Am I creative enough when it comes to finding solutions to everyday problems? Am I resilient enough? My personal opinion is that nowadays people are not as resilient as they used to be, and I think this article really reminds us that we all have the potential to become better versions of ourselves.

3

2.5: Book

Provide a summary of your Book.
(B2: approx. 150 words, C1: approx. 200 words, C2: approx. 250 words)

Book Title: The Old Man and the Sea

Author: Ernest Hemingway

"The Old Man and the Sea" is a novella written by Ernest Hemingway, published in 1952. The story revolves around Santiago, an aging Cuban fisherman who has endured a run of bad luck with his fishing trips. He is considered unlucky, and has not caught a fish for 84 days.

Another character in the novella is Manolin, a close friend and apprentice to Santiago. Manolin has a deep respect and affection for Santiago, who has taught him the art of fishing. Despite this, he is unable to work with his mentor as his parents demand that he gets a more lucrative job.

Santiago sets out on a solo fishing expedition in the Atlantic Ocean. He soon hooks a marlin, a fish of incredible size and strength. The battle between the old man and the marlin becomes a fierce test of endurance and willpower. Santiago's hands are cut and bleeding, but he refuses to give up. He speaks to the marlin, admiring its strength and spirit.

After a two-day struggle, Santiago finally manages to land the marlin. He ties the fish to his boat and begins the journey back to shore, triumphant but physically and mentally exhausted. However, his victory is short-lived as sharks are attracted to the marlin's blood and attack Santiago's boat.

Santiago fights bravely against the sharks, but in the end he loses most of the marlin's meat. He returns to shore with only the marlin's skeleton, which serves as a testament to the man's skill and determination. Although he is physically defeated, Santiago's spirit remains unbroken, and he reaffirms his connection to the sea.



2.6: Questions

Answer 3 questions about your Book in 50-100 words per question (all levels).

1. Describe your favourite character and explain why you like them.

The novella only really has three characters: Santiago, Manolin and the marlin. While all three are formidable in some ways, I must say that I've found Santiago particularly inspiring. What really struck me about Santiago is what a humble man he is. His humility and grace in both victory and defeat are admirable. When he finally catches the marlin, Santiago does not boast or revel in his triumph, but instead expresses deep respect and sorrow for the fish. He reminded me about importance of humility and compassion in our own lives.

2. Describe your favourite part of the story and explain why you liked it.

My favourite part of the book is Santiago's memories and dreams about lions. Throughout the novella, Santiago has recurring dreams of lions playing on the beaches of Africa. These dreams and memories serve as a reflection of Santiago's longing for his youth and the past, particularly the time he spent in Africa. They symbolize his connection to a time when he was strong and capable, and they contrast with his current state of old age and physical frailty. I like the feeling of nostalgia that you get from these parts of the novella.

3. What is the most important lesson you have learnt from the book?

An essential life lesson from the book is that success is not solely defined by the outcome, but by the relentless effort we bring to our pursuits. I think this inspires us to face difficulties with courage, and never abandon our dreams. Santiago's determination in battling the marlin showcases the human capacity to persevere. His aging body contrasted with his strong mind illustrates the wisdom that can come with age. The novella celebrates human strength and wisdom, inspiring reflection on life's challenges and our ability to overcome them.

4



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