

# A Guide to Language Proficiency Assessment



THE CROSS CULTURAL  
HEALTH CARE PROGRAM



To decipher between acceptable forms of language proficiency, first familiarize yourself with the requirements for interpreters to become nationally certified. To apply for the national certification, a person must be 1) 18 years of age or older 2) have a high school diploma, GED, or college degree 3) have at least 40 hours of interpreter training 4) oral language proficiency in English 5) oral language proficiency in the target language. Below are the preferred forms of language proficiency a person can provide when applying for the BTG course or national certification. This document provides additional information about how an applicant can provide proof of language proficiency, and lists acceptable scores from different language assessments.

## 1 High school diploma or college degree

First preference for proof of language proficiency in English and the target language is a high school diploma or college degree from an institution where that language is the language of instruction. Transcripts are accepted that show a degree in the language or at least 15 college credit hours in language courses.

## 2 Test results from applicant

The second preference is for applicants to provide test scores that meet the national certification requirements. Refer to page 2 for a list of acceptable tests and their scores.

## 3 Third-party testing

If applicants do not have proof of language proficiency, you can provide a test through a third party company. Your organization may need to set up an account with the testing company. Examples of companies and scores are listed on page 3.

## 4 Five or more years of professional experience in the language

If the applicant speaks a language of lesser diffusion and there are no proficiency tests available in their language, they can provide a letter from their employer verifying professional experience working in the language being assessed. If you accept this as proof of proficiency, notify the applicant that if they want to obtain their national certification, the national certifying bodies may request additional documentation.



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## Language Proficiency Scales

### Cambridge English Qualifications

English Level	CEFR	IELTS	TOEFL iBT	TOEFL CBT	TOEFL PBT	Cambridge Exams
Proficiency	C2	9.0 8.5				CPE Proficiency
Advanced	C1	8.0 7.5 7.0	110-120	270-300	637-677	CAE Advanced
Upper Intermediate	B2	6.5 6.0 5.5	87-109	227-269	567-636	FCE First
Lower Intermediate	B1	5.0 4.5 4.0	57-86	163-226	487-566	PET Preliminary
Elementary	A2	3.5 3.0	40-56	120-162	433-486	KET Key
Beginner	A1	2.5 2.0	0-39	0-119	310-434	
Starter	A0	1.0				

[https://www.unipage.net/en/language\\_levels](https://www.unipage.net/en/language_levels)

### ACTFL, ILR, CEFR Qualifications

ACTFL	ILR	CEFR
Novice (Low/Mid/High)	0/0+/1	A1
Intermediate (Low/Mid/High)	1+	A2
Advanced Low	2	B1
Advanced Mid	2+	B2
Advanced High	3/3+	C1
Superior	4+	C2

<https://blogs.transparent.com/language-news/2014/10/22/the-starting-line-how-to-determine-your-language-level/>

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## Language Proficiency Scales

### Third Party Language Tests

NAME OF TEST	ACCEPTED TEST SCORE OR RATING SYSTEM USED
Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR)	2+
ACTFL	Advanced Mid
Common European Framework for Language (CEFR)	B2
ALTA's Speaking & Listening Assessment	9
ALTA's Qualified Bilingual Staff Assessment	Level 2
Berlitz – Oral Proficiency Interview	8/B2.1
LanguageLine	Based on ILR scale
Language Testing International (LTI)	Based on CEFR, ILR, or ACTFL scales depending on the type of language proficiency certification needed
Certified Languages International (CLI)	Based on CEFR scale

### ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

- 1. Is proof of language proficiency required for BTG?** Yes! Proof of language proficiency is a BTG course prerequisite.
- 2. Is a Seal of biliteracy acceptable form of language proficiency?** No, Seals of Biliteracy do not meet the BTG course requirements.
- 3. What if an applicant does not have any of the above documents and there are limited tests available in their language?** Ask them for a signed letter from an employer or community member who can verify their language proficiency.
- 4. Can we accept AAPPL scores?** No, the highest level on the AAPPL is equivalent to a score of Advanced Low on the ACTFL. The national requirements for the ACTFL test is an Advanced-Mid score.
- 5. What if the applicant provides test results from a company or test not listed above?** When receiving scores from a test you are unfamiliar with, it may require some research to determine how the scale compares to others. For non-English languages, compare the scales to those of the ACTFL, ILR, CEFR. For English tests, compare the test to TOEFL, ELPT, IELTS.