

DET x CEFR alignment

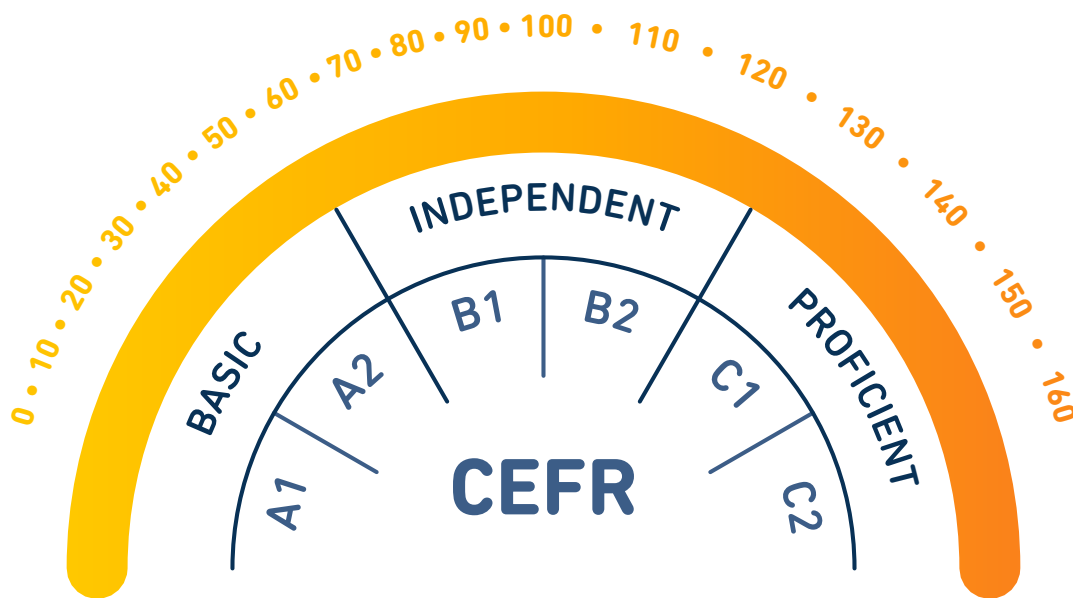


An externally validated study



The DET alignment with the CEFR

The Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR) is the leading international standard adopted by governments, educational institutions, and assessment providers that describes foreign language proficiency and enables the portability of learning and credentials between borders. It is the standard that Duolingo uses to reference all of our learning and assessment products, including the Duolingo English Test.



This alignment between the DET and the CEFR was established empirically in a previously conducted concordance study (Cardwell et al., 2024).

External Validation Study

In 2023, Duolingo sought to verify externally the alignment of the DET with the CEFR to provide assurance to government agencies and educational institutions that the DET meets the standard.

The external validation study was executed by ACS Ventures, LLC, an independent psychometric company with the help of Dr. Anthony Green, Director of the Centre for Research in English Language Learning and Assessment at the University of Bedfordshire. The methodology of the study was reviewed, validated, and approved by the Chartered Institute of Linguistics (CIOL), the UK's Royal Charter body for language practitioners.

The following evidence was examined:

- The content coverage of the DET in relation to the CEFR global scale;
- The representativeness of the DET scale score locations in relation to language activities, competencies, and strategies presented in the CEFR descriptors;
- The reliability and validity of the DET scores.

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Process

A panel of twelve subject matter experts reviewed the DET test taker responses, the elicited language skills, the linguistic characteristics of test items, and the task difficulty represented at the threshold score values for the CEFR framework on the DET. They evaluated whether the content associated with the threshold expectations for each CEFR level was appropriate to support interpretation and use of the cut scores as proof of English skills for high-stakes purposes (immigration, visas, higher education study).

- Expert panelist characteristics:
- Diverse nationalities, diverse geographic locations, diverse linguistic backgrounds (including English varieties), and work experiences.
- Familiarity with the target testing population.
- 7-30 years of experience teaching English as a second or other language (TESOL); ~13.2 years of experience in language assessment.

Results

Based on their evaluations, the panel validated the DET's alignment to the CEFR, with the following DET cut scores aligning with the relevant the CEFR levels:

CEFR level	DET score range
B1	60-95
B2	100-125
C1	130-150
C2	155-160

These recommendations matched the DET-CEFR alignment from the concordance study (Cardwell et al., 2024) providing further external validation to the adopted DET-CEFR cut scores.

Full details of this and other DET validation resources are available here: [Duolingo English Test Research & Publications](#)