

Mapping the TOEIC Bridge® Tests on the CEFR

Mapping TOEIC Bridge Test Scores Onto Levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

Background

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment provides a common basis for describing the skills needed to reach different levels of language proficiency. It is also used by language instructors, educators, curriculum designers and agencies working in the field of language development. The CEFR describes language proficiency in listening, reading, speaking and writing on a six-level scale:

- A1–A2 (Basic User)
- B1–B2 (Independent User)
- C1–C2 (Proficient User)

The CEFR provides a descriptive context that may be used to interpret the meaning and practical significance of scores on language tests. When language test scores can be related to CEFR levels, and this relationship can be adequately justified, the meaning of test scores and what candidates at minimum score levels are likely able to do may be clearer.

ETS's Goal

The purpose of this mapping study was to identify the minimum scores on the TOEIC Bridge® tests corresponding to the levels of language proficiency targeted by the tests, A1 to B1.

- The TOEIC Bridge Listening and Reading tests measure the receptive skills of people in the context of everyday life.
- The TOEIC Bridge Speaking and Writing tests measure the productive skills of people in the context of everyday life.

Standard-setting Study

Standard setting is the process by which a panel of informed experts makes score requirement recommendations that correspond with the level of knowledge, skill, proficiency, mastery or readiness candidates need to be placed in a certain category or level. The end result of standard setting is a recommended minimum score requirement, or cut score. The minimum scores for each CEFR level in this study are presented as the lower limits of the level for each test section.

This study used panels of experts — one panel for each test in the TOEIC Bridge assessments. Each panel consisted of 14 or 15 experts with extensive experience (14 years on average) in English-language teaching, curriculum development and/or assessment.

Results

The expert panels were asked to recommend minimum test scores (cut scores) for each of three main CEFR levels (A1, A2 and B1) and two “plus” levels (A2+ and B1+). A subsequent analysis of classification consistency and accuracy based on these recommendations indicated that it would be appropriate to recommend a cut score for the three main levels only (A1, A2 and B1). The table below presents the recommended minimum score for each test at each of these three CEFR levels for the tests reviewed.

Interpreting Results

Employers, institutions, English programs and learners can interpret the recommended minimum scores on the TOEIC Bridge tests by referring to the global descriptors and other tables in the CEFR. The results represent the recommendations of informed experts using recognized standard-setting approaches. However, they should be considered guidelines, as ETS does not recommend the use of rigid cut scores.

TOEIC Bridge Tests	Score Scale Range	Minimum Score		
		A1	A2	B1
Listening	15–50	16	26	39
Reading	15–50	19	34	45
Speaking	15–50	23	37	43
Writing	15–50	20	32	43

Note: Test takers with a perfect score (50) on a TOEIC Bridge test are likely to exhibit characteristics of CEFR level B2 performance. Test takers with a perfect score exceed the minimum requirements for CEFR level B1+ classification.

Technical Report

The report, “Mapping the Redesigned TOEIC Bridge Test Scores to Proficiency Levels of the CEFR,” is available [here](#).

For information about this study:

Contact your ETS Preferred Network (EPN) office via www.toiecglobal.com/contact or email at TOEIC@ets.org.

