

Fremdsprachliche Kommunikation

Dear Student,

You have decided to study English either as part of an Bachelor degree or as part of a teacher training programme.

While we welcome your decision, we must point out that it is absolutely essential that you have a very good command of English before you start your studies. Bearing in mind the fact that the Abitur still tends to vary considerably from school to school, we would like to help you arrive at a realistic assessment of your competence in English before you enrol in the department.

The description below is designed to help you judge your own communication skills.

There are six levels of linguistic competence ranging from elementary (A1) to 'near native' (C2).

Start at A1 in each section and tick all the levels you think you have reached.

Understanding Texts

Listening

A1 I can recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and my immediate physical surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.

A2 I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.

B1 I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs and topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.

B2 I can understand extended speech and academic lectures and even follow complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and

current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.

C1 I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.

C2 I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to become familiar with the accent.

Reading

A1 I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.

A2 I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, brochures, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.

B1 I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.

B2 I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.

C1 I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.

C2 I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.

Interaction and Text Production

Interaction

A1 I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I am trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.

A2 I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I cannot usually understand enough to maintain the conversation myself.

B1 I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).

B2 I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.

C1 I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.

C2 I can take part effortlessly in any discussion and am comfortable with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem, I can backtrack and restructure my statements around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.

Oral Production

A1 I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and whom I know.

A2 I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, my living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.

B1 I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.

B2 I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

C1 I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.

C2 I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.

Writing

A1 I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.

A2 I can write short, simple notes and messages relating to matters in areas of immediate need. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.

B1 I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.

B2 I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.

C1 I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing various points of view at some length. I can write detailed expositions of complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a

report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can write different kinds of texts in an assured, personal style appropriate to the reader in mind.

C2 I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.

To begin English studies at this university, you must demonstrate at least a B2 level. If you aim to teach at a Gymnasium or want to take a Bachelor course, you should ideally start out at the C1 level, or you may encounter difficulties. At the same time, if you have assessed your language at a lower level, you should reconsider your choice of subject. Should you decide you still want to study English, then you should first improve your English either at a language school or by spending a reasonable amount of time in an English-speaking country BEFORE YOU ENROL IN THE DEPARTMENT. Please note that even a good grade in English in the Abitur (Leistungskurs) does not necessarily mean that your English knowledge is sufficient for you to start your studies.