

Title:

ESL Exams: A Teacher's Guide

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Summary:

It's the end of another class, and one student has stayed behind. No problem, you think, maybe

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Article Body:

It's the end of another class, and one student has stayed behind. No problem, you think, maybe

ESL exams fall broadly into three main categories: General English, Business English and Academic

General English

Probably the most popular in this category are the Cambridge ESOL exams. One and a half million

The first two levels are the **KET** (Key English Test) and the **PET** (Preliminary English Test).

Next up from the PET is the **FCE** (First Certificate in English). The FCE has five sections.

Many universities and employers, however, prefer the **CAE** (Certificate in Advanced English).

After the CAE comes the **CPE** (Certificate of Proficiency in English), the highest level.

FCE, CAE and CPE have five grades, A-E, of which A-C are passes.

Cambridge also has a series of General English exams for Young Learners aged between 7 and 12.

Other General English exams

Cambridge also offers **CELS** (Certificates in English Language Skills). These are individual

Pitman, part of the British City and Guilds Group, is another examining body with a series of

Business English

Every year four and a half million people take the **TOEIC** (Test of English for International

Cambridge also has a series of business exams called the **BEC** (Business English Certificate).

Other Business English exams

Cambridge offers **BULATS** (The Business Language Testing Service). BULATS is designed specifically

Pitman has a three-level series of exams called **English for Business Communications**, which

Academic English

A common question from students is "What's the difference between TOEIC and TOEFL?" Well, both

Cambridge also has an academic exam, the **IELTS** (International English Language Testing

Comparing levels

One of the most common questions from students is how exams in the different categories compare. The six levels are A1 (Breakthrough), A2 (Waystage), B1 (Threshold), B2 (Vantage), C1 (Effective Proficiency). Here's a quick comparison of exams at the different levels. Bear in mind that this is a general guide.

- A1: YLE Movers, Pitman ESOL Basic, IELTS score 1-2.
- A2: KET, YLE Flyers, Pitman ESOL Elementary, TOEIC score 246-380, TOEFL iBT score 32-40.
- B1: PET, TOEIC score 381-540, BEC Preliminary, TOEFL iBT score 43-61, IELTS score 3.5-4.5.
- B2: FCE, Pitman ESOL Intermediate, TOEIC score 541-700, BEC Vantage, TOEFL iBT score 61-78.
- C1: CAE, Pitman ESOL Higher Intermediate, TOEIC score 701-910, BEC Higher, TOEFL iBT score 78-96.
- C2: CPE, Pitman ESOL Advanced, TOEIC score 911-990, TOEFL iBT score 113-120, IELTS score 7.0-7.5.

There is of course much more information about these exams on the Cambridge ESOL, TOEIC, TOEFL websites.

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