

ISE, IELTS and the CEFR

Trinity College London Integrated Skills in English (ISE)			Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)	International English Language Testing System (IELTS)**
Tests reading, writing, speaking and listening*				Tests reading, writing, speaking and listening
ISE IV	Distinction	PASS	C2	9.0
	Merit			8.0
	Pass			7.5
ISE III	Distinction	PASS	C1	7.0
	Merit			6.5
	Pass			6.0
ISE II	Distinction	PASS	B2	5.5
	Merit			5.0
	Pass			4.5
ISE I	Distinction	PASS	B1	4.0
	Merit			
	Pass			
ISE Foundation	Distinction	PASS	A2	
	Merit			
	Pass			
ISE A1	Distinction	PASS	A1	
	Merit			
	Pass			

* In each skill the candidate receives a band score of Pass, Merit or Distinction. The result for the overall exam is reported as Pass or Fail.

** Source: ielts.org/about-ielts/ielts-in-cefr-scale. Note that the IELTS band scores referred to in the figure are the overall band scores, not the individual module band scores for Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking.

This table shows ISE's and IELTS' equivalence to the CEFR, based on independent studies conducted by Trinity and the IELTS consortium respectively. The levels refer to the overall test score, not sub-scores for each skill (Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking).

It should be noted that the ISE-CEFR equivalency table presents the estimated level of a borderline ISE candidate. This means that the table shows the *minimum* possible CEFR level for a candidate at a given ISE level, respectively. For further information see trinitycollege.com/CEFR.

It is also important to note that equivalence studies are known to be highly complex and challenging owing to differences in construct and purpose. In addition, the CEFR is primarily concerned with promoting and facilitating cooperation between language education professionals and learners by providing a common metalanguage and reference framework. The CEFR is not, however, an assessment or a standardisation tool (Council of Europe, 2020), and as such cannot form the basis for precise equating.

Therefore, illustrative comparisons are indicative only. Before establishing appropriate proficiency standards, Trinity recommends that institutions and score users consult the Trinity [ISE scoring information](#), [ISE learner profiles](#), [ISE scoring guide](#) and the [ISE guide for higher education institutions and other test score users](#).