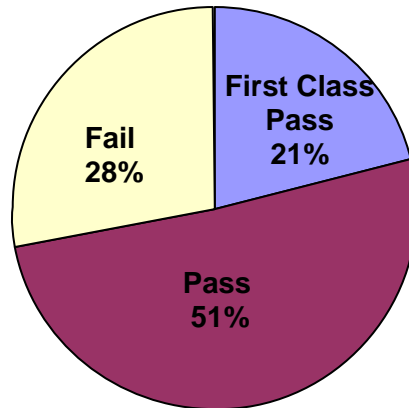


8984 International ESOL - Communicator

General observations

As with the previous level, the Fail rate is again this year disappointingly high. It is encouraging, however, to see a marked increase in First Class Passes, just a little less than double that of last year. This could indicate that candidates are on the one hand entered above their capabilities; on the other hand, where they *are* entered at the right level, they are performing very well.

B2



Areas of good performance

Those candidates who are well-prepared for the examination do well. Those candidates can rise to the challenges of the more demanding tasks they meet at this level. If they have a good command of more complex forms of language, they have a fairly evenly distributed level of performance across the skills, managing successfully to decode the more complex listening and reading texts and then producing the necessary level of language required in the writing tasks with some good awareness of usage and grammar and a good range of vocabulary. Multiple-choice tasks are usually handled well.

Areas for development

Where candidates are poorly prepared for the examination, it naturally follows that they are failing or scraping a bare pass. Therefore, they need to be familiar with the different task requirements. Particularly weak tasks are Listening Parts 2, 3 and 4, Reading Part 4 and Writing Part 1. In contrast to multiple-choice questions, candidates generally do less well when having to formulate their answers, both in general terms and within the stated word limits.

Recommendations

Candidates need to be made fully aware of the increased level of performance required at B2 compared to B1. The CEFR makes reference to the ability to understand *complex* communication on both concrete and abstract topics, to being able to obtain information from different sources and to communicate clearly and in detail, at length and with attention to format and style, purpose and audience. Practice must therefore be provided at the right level.

Tips

- Practise neat, legible handwriting – the best work will fail if the marker cannot read it.

- Practise with mock examinations – look closely at the instructions for the different tasks. Underline key words relating to number of words stipulated and, for the Writing, what text type is to be produced, who is being written to and what points are to be included.
- Become familiar with a variety of text types including charts and graphs.
- Give time for preparation – read a text fully before answering the questions, read the questions carefully before listening to the text, plan a written outline – and then build in extra time afterwards for checking and proof-reading.

Additional comments

Centres have to ensure that the training provided is at the appropriate level for B2 candidates. Once again, more specific examination preparation with the use of mock examinations and paying close attention to the syllabus and the CEFR descriptors will help candidates perform to the very best of their ability.