

ICSE English language guidelines for learners.

The skill to effectively communicate in English is central to any role carried out by the modern licensed Irish Security Operative. Unlike other training programs, for example the Safe Pass, it is not possible to deliver either the QQI level 4 Door Security Procedures or Guarding Skills programs in a language other than English. If English is not your first language you may be unsure if you have the English language skills to attend our programs. The following guidelines detail ICSE's and the Private Security Authority's (PSA) position in relation to required language skills. It is important that all candidates have a good understanding of English to ensure they can successfully attend, comprehend and complete our training programs and assessments.

1. ICSE for classroom courses, in conjunction with Private Security Authority (PSA) Guidelines, require that candidates have, **as a minimum**, a B1 level of English. The minimum level B1 is outlined below. If you are unsure of your current level, you can take a free test on a number of sites like <http://www.examenglish.com/leveltest/index.php>
2. ICSE for our Virtual Classroom courses, in consultation with the Private Security Authority, require that candidates have, **as a minimum**, a B2 level of English. The minimum level B2 is outlined below. If you are unsure of your current level, you can take a free test on a number of sites like <http://www.examenglish.com/leveltest/index.php>
3. If a candidate believes their level of English comprehension and communication is at a suitable level to attend our courses, they can book a place on a course. However, candidates that ICSE feel may not have the required language level will be required to provide certification to demonstrate their English level or complete a pre course language test with us. ICSE will accept result of this test and the opinion of a trainees chief ICSE tutor regarding a candidate's ability to effectively communicate in English.
4. It is a candidate's responsibility to ensure that they have the required level of English prior to making a booking. A candidate that fails the language assessment is not entitled to a refund however they can return and complete the program at a future date, when they have the required level of English, at no additional cost.
5. If at any stage ICSE feel that a candidate's level of English comprehension is not good enough to complete a training program, they will be informed by their tutor, and removed from the program. However, they will be permitted to return, and attend the course again, free of charge at a later date when their level of English is at the required level.
6. B1 or B2 is the minimum level required, however each candidate will be subjected to the same assessment criteria as for all candidates. Holding a minimum of a B1 or B2 is no guarantee that a candidate will pass the program. The higher a candidate's levels of comprehension the greater potential they have to succeed.

7. If a candidate is unhappy with their tutor's decision concerning their level of English comprehension, they can appeal any such decision to the Managing Director of ICSE by contacting the office on 091- 534918.

CEF Levels

The **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages** (CEF or CEFR) was put together by the Council of Europe as a way of standardising the levels of language exams in different regions. It is very widely used internationally and all important exams are mapped to the CEFR.

There are six levels: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2. These are described in the table below.

Council of Europe levels	Description
C2 Mastery	The capacity to deal with material which is academic or cognitively demanding, and to use language to good effect at a level of performance which may in certain respects be more advanced than that of an average native speaker. Example: <i>CAN scan texts for relevant information, and grasp main topic of text, reading almost as quickly as a native speaker.</i>
C1 Effective Operational Proficiency	The ability to communicate with the emphasis on how well it is done, in terms of appropriacy, sensitivity and the capacity to deal with unfamiliar topics. Example: <i>CAN deal with hostile questioning confidently. CAN get and hold onto his/her turn to speak.</i>
B2 Vantage	The capacity to achieve most goals and express oneself on a range of topics. Example: <i>CAN show visitors around and give a detailed description of a place.</i>
B1 Threshold	The ability to express oneself in a limited way in familiar situations and to deal in a general way with non-routine information. Example: <i>CAN ask to open an account at a bank, provided that the procedure is straightforward.</i>
A2 Waystage	An ability to deal with simple, straightforward information and begin to express oneself in familiar contexts. Example: <i>CAN take part in a routine conversation on simple predictable topics.</i>
A1 Breakthrough	A basic ability to communicate and exchange information in a simple way. Example: <i>CAN ask simple questions about a menu and understand simple answers.</i>