



The Basic Communication Certificate in English (BCCE™)

The Basic Communication Certificate in English (BCCE™) examination is designed for students who require certification of their competency in English as a second or other language at an intermediate level. The BCCE™ is aimed at the B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and was designed to bridge the gap between A2 and B2 level examinations.

The BCCE™ is developed and scored by Hellenic American University. All parts of the examination are written following specific guidelines and test specifications. Items are pre-tested to ensure standardization and validity. Care is taken that the tests are fair and accessible to all examinees.

The BCCE™ tests communicative competency in all four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking, as well as their vocabulary and grammar resources.

Uses of the BCCE™

The BCCE™ is used by organizations, firms, public agencies, and academic institutions for a wide range of purposes. The following is just a sample of possible uses:

- Corporate users can use the BCCE™ as a useful tool when recruiting a global workforce
- Government agencies can use the BCCE™ when setting language requirements for migrants
- Job placement agencies can use the BCCE™ when setting language requirements for non-native speakers of English

The Level of the BCCE™

The BCCE™ aims at the B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference. At the B1 level, language users:

- can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.
- can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst traveling in an area where the language is spoken
- can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest
- can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans

Format and Content of the BCCE™

Section	Time	Short Description	Number of items
Listening	Approx. 30 min	Part 1 (multiple choice) A short recorded conversation is followed by a question. The answer choices are shown as pictures.	10
		Part 2 (multiple choice) A short recorded message or announcement is followed by a question that is also printed in the test booklet.	9
		Part 3 (multiple choice) A recorded radio interview is broken into three segments. Two questions follow each segment. The questions are also printed in the test booklet.	6
		Part 4 (multiple choice) A short recorded talk is followed by five questions that are also printed in the test booklet.	5
Grammar, Vocabulary, Reading (GVR)	70 min	Grammar (multiple choice) An incomplete sentence is followed by a choice of words or phrases to complete it. Only one choice is grammatically correct.	25
		Vocabulary (multiple choice) An incomplete sentence is followed by a choice of words or phrases to complete it. Only one choice is semantically correct.	25

		<p>Reading Part 1 (multiple choice) Four short related texts presented as advertisements or reviews are accompanied by ten questions.</p>	10
		<p>Reading Part 2(multiple choice) A short argumentative text is accompanied by five questions.</p>	5
		<p>Reading Part 3(multiple choice) A short informal email is accompanied by five questions.</p>	5
		<p>Reading Part 4 (multiple choice) A short text is accompanied by five questions.</p>	5
Writing	50 min	<p>Task A: Email 1 Candidates write an informal email using provided information.</p>	2 tasks
		<p>Task B: Email 2 Candidates write a competition entry email using provided information.</p>	
Speaking	10 – 15 min	<p>Task 1: Warm Up Candidates answer non-sensitive personal questions.</p>	4 tasks

The Listening section of the BCCE™

The listening section tests English listening skills and is delivered via an audio recording. It consists of four parts and lasts approximately 30 minutes. The recording uses normal rates of speech delivery and there is no background noise. All questions are printed in the candidate's test booklet.

Part 1

In Part 1, candidates hear ten short conversations. After each conversation, candidates hear a question that is also written in their test booklets. Candidates choose the correct response from the three pictured answer choices. All conversations and questions are heard only once.

Part 2

In Part 2, candidates hear nine short messages. After each message or announcement, candidates hear a question that is also written in their test booklets. Candidates must choose the correct answer from the three choices A, B, or C to answer each question. All messages or announcements are heard only once.

Part 3

In Part 3, candidates hear an interview broken into three parts. After each part, candidates hear two questions that are also written in their test booklets. Candidates must choose the correct answer from the three choices, A, B, or C to answer each question. The interview and questions are heard only once.

Part 4

In Part 4, candidates hear a short talk. The talk is heard twice and candidates may take notes. After the second listening, the candidates hear five questions that are also written in their test booklets. Candidates must choose the correct answer from the three choices, A, B, or C to answer each question.

Grammar, Vocabulary and Reading (GVR) section of the BCCE™

Grammar

In the grammar part of the GVR section, candidates read an incomplete sentence that is followed by a choice of words or phrases. Candidates choose A, B, C, or D to complete the sentence. Only one choice is grammatically correct. There are 25 grammar questions in the GVR section.

Vocabulary

In the vocabulary part of the GVR section, candidates read an incomplete sentence that is followed by a choice of words or phrases. Candidates choose A, B, C, or D to complete the sentence. Only one choice fits the context of the sentence correctly. There are 25 vocabulary questions in the GVR section.

Reading Part 1

In Reading Part 1, candidates read four short related advertisements or reviews. Candidates answer the ten questions that follow by choosing the best answer from A, B, C, or D based on the information in the texts.

Reading Part 2

In Reading Part 2, candidates read a short argumentative text. Candidates answer the five questions that follow by choosing the best answer from A, B, C, or D based on the information in the text.

Reading Part 3

In Reading Part 3, candidates read a short informal email. Candidates answer the five questions that follow by choosing the best answer from A, B, C, or D based on the information in the text.

Reading Part 4

In Reading Part 4, candidates read a short expository text. Candidates answer the five questions that follow by choosing the best answer from A, B, C, or D based on the information in the text.

The Writing section of the BCCE™

The Writing Section of the BCCE™ consists of two tasks. Candidates are given 50 minutes to complete both tasks.

In Task A, candidates write an informal email.

In Task B, candidates write an email competition entry.

In both tasks, candidates are provided with information that they must use and elaborate on. Candidates are expected to write between 80 and 100 words for each task.

The Writing Section is marked by at least two raters trained by Hellenic American University.

The Speaking section of the BCCE™

The Speaking Section of the BCCE™ consists of four tasks covering more than one theme.

In **Task One**, candidates answer non-sensitive personal questions and talk about their general likes and dislikes.

In **Task Two**, candidates are presented with a picture and are asked to answer questions based on it. Candidates are also asked to describe an experience that is similar to the one shown in the picture.

Task Three is a role-play activity in which candidates are presented with specific communicative goals to carry out during the activity.

In **Task Four**, candidates are presented with a series of general questions related to the theme of the role play.

The Speaking section lasts 10 – 15 minutes and may take place on a date either before or after the administration of the written part of the test.

Local oral examiners trained by Hellenic American University conduct and score the Speaking Test. All four tasks are scored.