

Language level guidelines for German and English, dated March 21, 2023 English Version (not legally binding)

These are the language level guidelines for German and English at Bielefeld University, dated March 21, 2023. The previous guidelines for English language level B2 from November 1, 2022, have been replaced.

1. General language requirements

The regular language of instruction at Bielefeld University is German. Therefore, all students attending courses taught in German are expected to have a good command of German. International students applying for courses are generally required to provide proof of language proficiency at level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR); accepted language certificates as well as exceptions are regulated in the "Ordnung über den Zugang internationaler Studienbewerber*innen zum Studium an der Universität Bielefeld (Regulations for the admission of international students to study at Bielefeld University)".

Furthermore, it is assumed that students attending courses taught in German also have an adequate command of English, at level B2 CEFR, to understand required literature and to complete English-language elective courses.

2. Specific language requirements

The language proficiency requirements for German and English stated in the course-specific examination regulations at Bielefeld University (usually subject-specific regulations) may deviate from the principles outlined in section 1, based on the respective framework regulations and the Hochschulgesetz (Higher Education Act). Insofar as the language proficiency levels

- German at level B2 CEFR
- English at level B2 CEFR
- English at level C1 CEFR

are mandatory according to Bielefeld University's guidelines in the course-specific examination regulations the following requirements apply:

a. German at proficiency level B2 CEFR

In addition to the regulations of the "Ordnung über den Zugang internationaler Studienbewerber*innen zum Studium an der Universität Bielefeld (Regulations for the admission of international students to study at Bielefeld University)", the following certificates are sufficient evidence of proficiency in the German language (minimum level):

- TestDaF ("Test Deutsch als Fremdsprache") with a score of at least TestDaF level (TDN) 3 in all four subtests,
- DSH ("Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang ausländischer Studienbewerberinnen und -bewerber") at level 1 (DSH1) at a German university, or under the professional and organizational responsibility of a German university or German "Studienkolleg" abroad, whose examination regulations are registered with the "Hochschulrektorenkonferenz" (German Rectors' Conference),
- ÖSD ("Österreichisches Sprachdiplom") B2,
- Goethe Certificate B2,
- "Deutsches Sprachdiplom der Kultusministerkonferenz" Level II (DSD II), if all four subskills are passed at level B2.

b. English at proficiency level B2 CEFR

If the university entrance qualification or an English-language university degree was not obtained in Australia, Ireland, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, or the United States of America, the following certificates are sufficient evidence of proficiency (minimum level):

- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) "Internet-based" test (IBT) with a score of at least 87 points,
- IELTS test with a score of at least 5.5,
- Cambridge Test - Certificate in Advanced English (CAE),
- First Certificate in English (FCE) with a grade of at least B,
- UNICert Level II,
- Completion of a relevant module "Language Acquisition Level B2" at Bielefeld University's Fachsprachenzentrum (Language Center),
- A certificate from a state or state-recognized school or university explicitly confirming English language proficiency at level B2 CEFR. The "Merkblatt zum Zeugnis der allgemeinen Hochschulreife für Schülerinnen und Schüler der gymnasialen Oberstufe an Gymnasien und Gesamtschulen" (Information leaflet on the Certificate of General Higher Education Entrance Qualification for Students in Upper Secondary Education at Grammar Schools and Comprehensive Schools) of the Ministry for School and Education of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, as of August 2018 is used to evaluate school certificates obtained in Germany.

c. English at proficiency level C1 CEFR

If the university entrance qualification or an English-language university degree was not obtained in Australia, Ireland, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom or the United States of America, the following certificates are recognized (minimum level):

- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) "Internet-based" Test (IBT) with a score of at least 90,
- IELTS test with a score of at least 7.0,
- Cambridge Test - Certificate in Advanced English (CAE),
- UNICert Level III,
- Completion of a relevant module "Language Acquisition Level C1" at Bielefeld University's Fachsprachenzentrum (Language Center),
- a certificate from a state or state-recognized school or university explicitly confirming English language proficiency at level C1 CEFR. The "Merkblatt zum Zeugnis der allgemeinen Hochschulreife für Schülerinnen und Schüler der gymnasialen Oberstufe an Gymnasien und Gesamtschulen" (Information leaflet on the Certificate of General Higher Education Entrance Qualification for Students in Upper Secondary Education at Grammar Schools and Comprehensive Schools) of the Ministry for School and Education of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, as of August 2018 is used to evaluate school certificates obtained in Germany.