



You can make it work!

telc Language Certificates for Business Purposes

Foreign language competence in companies: Essential for international business relations



“Multilingualism bridges the gap between different cultures and is the basis for the exchange of ideas and mutual understanding.”

Dr. Mara C. Harvey
Head UHNW Europe international, UBS AG

Verifiable language skills make for clarity

Those companies whose employees have good foreign language skills remain internationally competitive. But there is an urgent need for objective ways of determining the proficiency level of these competences – especially bearing in mind that in future there may be a shortage of well-qualified employees.

International cross-border business relations offer a long-term potential for growth. Multi-lingual proficiency, combined with tolerance and open-mindedness, plays a key role in the success of a company’s international relations.

Poor foreign language skills can have a seriously negative effect on the European economy, as shown by a representative study carried out by the European Commission in 2006. It is estimated that at least 945,000 small and medium-sized companies in Europe have lost orders partly because of their employees’ poor language skills.

Companies can only increase their productivity when their staff is linguistically equipped to deal competently with diverse business encounters. It is important to think not just of English here, but to include other languages as well. In fact, a competitive advantage may not arise unless someone in the firm can speak the client’s native language.

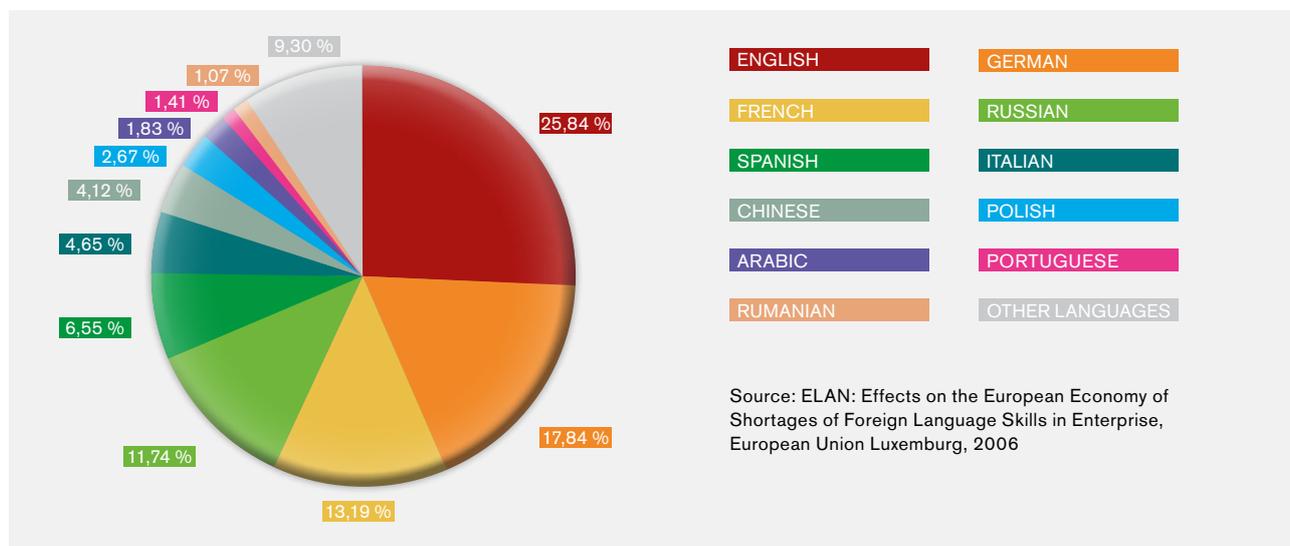
Inasmuch as the labour market has fewer well-qualified potential employees, companies must consider hiring workers who have a migratory background. Language proficiency will facilitate daily administration and contribute to effective internal communication.

“Language skills are vital in today’s globalized world. And it is increasingly important for employees to be able to prove that they have a particular level of competence in English and other languages. That’s why certificates and assessments based on the Common European Framework of Reference play such a key role.”

Dr. Ian McMaster
Editor-in-Chief, Business Spotlight

Companies agree: Multilingualism is *THE* prerequisite for commercial success

Foreign languages in which small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) would like to improve their staff’s competence:



The Common European Framework of Reference

Language competence is now internationally measurable and comparable

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) makes it possible for heads of companies or their human resources departments to judge in a transparent and exact way whether or not an employee is able to cope linguistically with particular situations at the workplace.

The CEFR was published by the Council of Europe in 2001, categorising the main skills of Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing, and has set standards ever since. It differentiates between six levels of proficiency in any given language:

- A1 and A2: Basic User
- B1 and B2: Independent User
- C1 and C2: Proficient User

All telc examinations are aligned to the internationally-recognised CEFR classification!

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR): The ABCs of Language Competence



| | SPEAKING: Conversations, Phone Calls, Presentat., Meetings |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| C2 | <p>Can produce clear, smoothly flowing well-structured speech with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.</p> <p>Has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms.</p> <p>Can take an active or leading part in negotiations and meetings with both native and non-native speakers.</p> <p>Can react appropriately to unexpected situations which may be influenced by cultural differences.</p> |
| C1 | <p>Can express him- / herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly.</p> <p>Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on complex subjects, integrating sub themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.</p> <p>Can give clear, well-structured presentations on topics belonging to his / her own field with the help of tables and figures and suited to the target group, responding spontaneously to questions from members of the audience.</p> |
| B2 | <p>Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction and sustained relationships with native speakers quite possible without imposing strain on either party.</p> <p>Can give clear, detailed descriptions and reports and can clearly put forward a point of view on an issue.</p> <p>Can express his / her ideas and opinions in meetings with precision, can present and respond to complex lines of argument and solve differences of opinion convincingly.</p> |
| B1 | <p>Can enter unprepared into conversation on familiar topics, express personal opinions and exchange information on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life.</p> <p>Can express thoughts well enough to be understood without difficulty most of the time.</p> <p>Can pass on short passages from texts and presentations relevant to his / her professional field in an informal exchange of information.</p> |
| A2 | <p>Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information.</p> <p>Can give a simple description or presentation of people, living or working conditions, daily routines, likes / dislikes etc.</p> <p>Can ask for and react to information on matters to do with work, if familiar language patterns are used.</p> |
| A1 | <p>Can interact in a simple way in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, but communication is totally dependent on rephrasing, repair, and on repetition at a slower rate of speech.</p> <p>Can greet clients and co-workers and use simple greeting and leave-taking expressions.</p> <p>Can ask and answer simple questions about personal details and the workplace, including name, home town, location, products.</p> |

| LISTENING: Receiving and Processing Information | WRITING: Letters, Faxes, Emails, Minutes, Reports | READING: Receiving and Processing Information |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Has no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language. Can understand all native speakers even if they are speaking on abstract or complex specialised topics that are not within the listener's own field. Needs a moment to become accustomed to a new accent.</p> | <p>Can write clear, smoothly flowing, complex texts in an appropriate and effective style. Can exploit a comprehensive and reliable mastery of a very wide range of language to formulate thoughts precisely. Can produce comprehensible and well-structured reports and articles on complex subjects relating to his / her professional capacity, e.g. writing the minutes of a meeting.</p> | <p>Can understand and critically interpret virtually all forms of the written language. Can appreciate subtle distinctions of style and implicit as well as explicit meaning. Can understand all types of correspondence. Can read and understand contracts, regulations and instruction manuals.</p> |
| <p>Can understand enough to follow extended speech on abstract and complex topics, though may need to confirm occasional details. Can recognise a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. Can understand presentations, reports and operating instructions connected with his / her profession, even when these are complex and expressed in complicated language.</p> | <p>Can write clear, well-structured texts on complex subjects. Can express him- / herself in a clear and precise manner, and can make effective, flexible use of a style appropriate to the reader in mind. Can write a formally correct letter of complaint and request that problems be addressed. Can expand and support points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples.</p> | <p>Can understand a wide range of lengthy, complex texts which occur in a social, professional or educational context, provided he / she can reread difficult sections. Can extract the required information from complex texts relating to his / her own area of specialty. Can understand comprehensive reports and analyses.</p> |
| <p>Can understand the main ideas on both concrete and abstract topics which may be highly complex with regard to structure and content, if delivered in a standard dialect. Can follow extended speech and complex lines of argument, provided the topic is reasonably familiar. Can understand the essential aspects of announcements, presentations and discussions within his / her professional field, as long as standard language is used.</p> | <p>Can write clear, detailed texts on a variety of subjects related to his / her field of interest, synthesising and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources. Has a sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints and develop arguments. Can compose standard formal letters to business partners and official departments.</p> | <p>Can adapt style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, using appropriate reference sources selectively. Has a broad reading vocabulary, but may experience some difficulty with low-frequency idioms. Can read correspondence relating to his / her area of specialty and extract the essential points. Can understand texts within his / her area of specialty, including illustrations and tables.</p> |
| <p>Can understand straightforward factual information about common everyday or job-related topics. Can understand what is said in an everyday conversation if people speak clearly, but must ask for words or expressions to be repeated on occasion. Can understand the gist of longer conversations and meetings on straightforward matters related to his / her professional field, provided speech is clearly articulated and in standard dialect.</p> | <p>Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within his / her field of interest. Can ask for or convey simple information of immediate relevance in personal letters and messages, indicating what he / she finds important. Can write short, simple texts on developments or results for a report or minutes, perhaps using straightforward tables and graphs.</p> | <p>Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to his / her field of interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension. Can recognise significant points in straightforward newspaper articles on familiar subjects. Can understand standard letters from business partners and official departments. Can understand the main content and important details in articles and reports on themes connected with his / her field.</p> |
| <p>Can understand enough to be able to meet needs of a concrete type, provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated and is related to very basic personal and family-related information or areas such as shopping, local geography and work. Can understand the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.</p> | <p>Has a limited repertoire of short memorised phrases covering predictable survival situations. Can use basic sentence patterns and link them with connectors like "and", "but" or "because". Can write letters which include simple expressions used to make requests and to thank people, as well as salutations and closing formulae. Can write short directions on how to get to a meeting or place of work.</p> | <p>Can understand short, simple texts on familiar matters of a concrete type which consist of high-frequency everyday or job-related language. Can understand short, simple texts containing frequently used vocabulary and some internationally familiar words. Can understand simple written messages, letters, faxes and emails, e.g. about the company's products or for making appointments.</p> |
| <p>Can understand everyday expressions related to immediate needs, as long as speaking partners are willing to talk slowly and clearly, using repetitions. Can understand numbers, quantities, cost and time.</p> | <p>Has a very basic range of simple expressions about personal details and needs of a concrete type. Can write simple, isolated phrases and sentences. Can enter personal details into a form. Can write a message to tell someone where he / she is or where they can meet.</p> | <p>Can understand very short, simple texts a single phrase at a time. Can get an idea of the content of simple informational material and short simple descriptions, especially if there is visual support. Can understand a form well enough to fill in basic personal details. Can understand the most important computer commands, e.g. "open", "save" and "exit".</p> |

"[...] If a job-seeker can show certification of language competence according to the Common European Framework, this gives the employer a measurable benchmark when choosing new personnel, and in addition it is a big advantage for the applicant."

Stefan Kiefer

Head of Human Resources Trucks, Linde Material Handling GmbH

An efficient tool for Management and Human Resources alike

telc Language Certificates and their European-wide standards help to draw up and verify job specifications

It is common for jobseekers and employees to claim fluency in written and spoken English. But how good is their command of the English language? The CEFR guides managing directors and personnel officers in providing specific requirements for designated positions. Sales representatives, for example, must be able to communicate and successfully negotiate with their customers from abroad. Office workers or product managers will be expected to have other language skills, and all these requirements can be expressed in terms of CEFR levels.

How companies can use the CEFR in their job advertisements can be seen in this example. In order to ensure that only those people who have the necessary language competence in French and English will apply for a certain position, RSF Europe stipulates in an advertisement exactly which CEFR level is required.

A real-life example



Part-time marketing & administrative assistant (m/f)

We are a small company in west Luxembourg, specialised in the museum AV sector. Due to restructuring we are looking to expand our team to include a part-time marketing and administrative assistant.

The ideal candidate will:

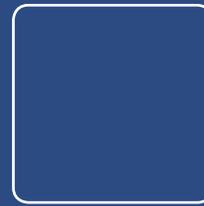
- Speak English and French to minimum B2 level on the CEFR scale
- Have studied to Bac+2 level in a secretarial or marketing field
- Have good organisational skills and the ability to work without supervision
- Be comfortable with computer systems and standard office software
- Have an EU passport or work permit for Luxembourg

The responsibilities will include the following:

- Marketing
- Website content management
- General administration
- Logistics management
- A limited amount of commercial work
- General secretarial / receptionist work

We are looking for someone to work approx. 60%, however this is open to negotiation. No particular experience is strictly necessary, however you should be willing to develop and grow into the role.

Example job advertisement from RSF Europe SA, Luxembourg



telc – The European Language Certificates: Setting standards for language competence at work

Our cooperation with leading companies together with the continually increasing number of candidates taking our examinations demonstrate that *telc – language tests* and Europe complement each other: Europe speaks telc!

telc gGmbH is a non-profit subsidiary of the German Adult Education Authority and has been developing, constructing and distributing scientifically sound, standardised language examinations for over 45 years. We offer over 80 different certificates in 10 languages which reliably attest language competence for people in many different professional sectors.

telc gGmbH, as the partner of the Federal German Government, provides language examinations for immigrants to Germany at the end of their integration course. Applicants for German citizenship can also demonstrate the required language proficiency by means of a telc certificate.

Modern companies appreciate the way that the CEFR can classify language skills in a reliable, transparent manner. This is accomplished with telc examinations.

As well as examinations testing general language skills, telc gGmbH offers certificates which assess communication in a business context. The contents of these exams mirror typical processes within companies. Thus a telc business language certificate documents a person's ability to deal with language challenges at the workplace.

Why telc – language tests?

- One provider: certificates in ten languages and on all CEFR levels
- Work-related certificates in three European languages
- Scientifically researched standards measuring communication skills
- Strict adherence to the CEFR as yardstick
- All under one roof: *telc – language tests* are developed and marked centrally
- Exams on demand: companies can request tailor-made examinations
- Efficient local networks: over 2.000 Examination Centres worldwide
- Companies can also acquire a licence to become an Examination Centre
- Flexible dates for examinations, short deadlines
- Optimal value for money
- Quick and reliable processing of examination results at telc headquarters in Frankfurt
- Practical mock tests in all ten languages available at **www.telc.net**

"We have passed the telc English B1 Business examination with success and are now working towards the telc English B2 Business exam. Our company Agrarfrost attaches great importance to further training opportunities for its employees and this regular language training is very helpful. It has given us confidence for dealing with our customers and external audits. A telc Certificate is officially recognized in business circles as being proof of effective language training."

Manuela Seelig, Frauke Ewald
Agrarfrost GmbH & Co. KG

The
telc Online
Placement Test
is available in English,
German and Spanish.
More information at
[www.telc.net/
placement](http://www.telc.net/placement)



Our Language Certificates

ENGLISH

| | |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| C2 | telc English C2 |
| C1 | telc English C1 |
| B2-C1 | telc English B2-C1 Business telc English B2-C1 University |
| B2 | telc English B2 telc English B2 School telc English B2 Business telc English B2 Technical |
| B1-B2 | telc English B1-B2 telc English B1-B2 School telc English B1-B2 Business |
| B1 | telc English B1 telc English B1 School telc English B1 Business telc English B1 Hotel and Restaurant |
| A2-B1 | telc English A2-B1 telc English A2-B1 School telc English A2-B1 Business |
| A2 | telc English A2 telc English A2 School |
| A1 | telc English A1 telc English A1 Junior |

TÜRKÇE

| | |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| C1 | telc Türkçe C1 |
| B2 | telc Türkçe B2 telc Türkçe B2 Okul |
| B1 | telc Türkçe B1 telc Türkçe B1 Okul |
| A2 | telc Türkçe A2 telc Türkçe A2 Okul telc Türkçe A2 İlkokul |
| A1 | telc Türkçe A1 |

DEUTSCH

| | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| C2 | telc Deutsch C2 |
| C1 | telc Deutsch C1 telc Deutsch C1 Beruf telc Deutsch C1 Hochschule |
| B2-C1 | telc Deutsch B2-C1 Beruf telc Deutsch B2-C1 Medizin telc Deutsch B2-C1 Medizin Fachsprachprüfung |
| B2 | telc Deutsch B2+ Beruf telc Deutsch B2 Medizin Zugangsprüfung telc Deutsch B2 |
| B1-B2 | telc Deutsch B1-B2 Beruf telc Deutsch B1-B2 Pflege |
| B1 | telc Deutsch B1+ Beruf Zertifikat Deutsch Zertifikat Deutsch für Jugendliche |
| A2-B1 | Deutsch-Test für Zuwanderer |
| A2 | telc Deutsch A2+ Beruf Start Deutsch 2 telc Deutsch A2 Schule |
| A1 | Start Deutsch 1 telc Deutsch A1 für Zuwanderer telc Deutsch A1 Junior |

ITALIANO

| | |
|-----------|------------------|
| B2 | telc Italiano B2 |
| B1 | telc Italiano B1 |
| A2 | telc Italiano A2 |
| A1 | telc Italiano A1 |

PORTUGUÊS

| | |
|-----------|-------------------|
| B1 | telc Português B1 |
|-----------|-------------------|

ESPAÑOL

| | |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| B2 | telc Español B2 telc Español B2 Escuela |
| B1 | telc Español B1 telc Español B1 Escuela |
| A2-B1 | telc Español A2-B1 Escuela |
| A2 | telc Español A2 telc Español A2 Escuela |
| A1 | telc Español A1 telc Español A1 Escuela telc Español A1 Júnior |

FRANÇAIS

| | |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| B2 | telc Français B2 |
| B1 | telc Français B1 telc Français B1 Ecole telc Français B1 pour la Profession |
| A2 | telc Français A2 telc Français A2 Ecole |
| A1 | telc Français A1 telc Français A1 Junior |

РУССКИЙ ЯЗЫК

| | |
|-----------|----------------------|
| B2 | telc Русский язык B2 |
| B1 | telc Русский язык B1 |
| A2 | telc Русский язык A2 |
| A1 | telc Русский язык A1 |

JĘZYK POLSKI

| | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| B1-B2 | telc Język polski B1-B2 Szkoła |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|

اللغة العربية

| | |
|-----------|-----------------------|
| B1 | telc اللغة العربية B1 |
|-----------|-----------------------|

“Good language skills are a must-have in international business. telc Language Certificates give the employees and also the Human Resources department of their company a clear indication of how good they are at a particular language.”

Doris Franz, Ken Ferguson
Design & Training, Deutsche Telekom Training GmbH



How can a telc Language Certificate be acquired?

From competence to qualification

telc Language Certificates help your company to assess the successfulness of an in-house training measure because they give objective proof of the language competence achieved by the participants.

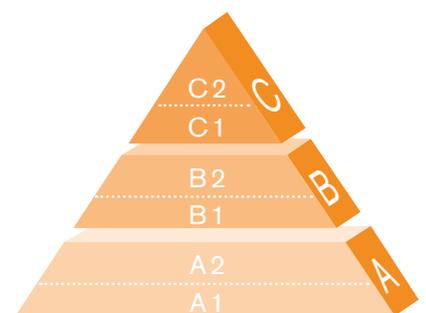
There are two steps towards a telc Language Certificate:

1. Acquiring language competence

Language courses are offered worldwide by all our 2.000 licensed Examination Centres, including German Adult Education Centres (Volkshochschulen) and private language schools. It is equally possible for an employee who has become proficient during a stay abroad or after learning privately to register for a telc exam. A telc language examination can be taken by anyone who has reached the required level by any method and without special preparation, although we strongly recommend doing the mock exam.

2. Taking the telc examination

telc examinations can normally only be conducted in one of our many licensed Examination Centres; however, with special approval, they may also take place on company premises. The oral part of the examination is always conducted by our specially-trained examiners. To find an Examination Centre near you, go to www.telc.net and use the country or postal code search function.



The six proficiency levels of the CEFR



Setting new standards: telc's quality attributes

Tried and tested and always up-to-date

There are separate telc Certificates for different languages, levels of competence and target groups. But all our examination formats have something in common: a high quality standard based on scientific research.

Internal quality assurance

Leading academically-trained, didactic experts and test constructors, together with experienced native speakers, develop various exam formats in the telc headquarters in Frankfurt. They do so following the latest research and according to the highest academic standards.

The administration of the tests can only take place in licensed telc Examination Centres. The oral component must be carried out by specially trained telc Examiners.

As a matter of course, telc tests are continually checked on their validity, reliability and objectiveness, thus guaranteeing the highest possible quality.

External quality assurance

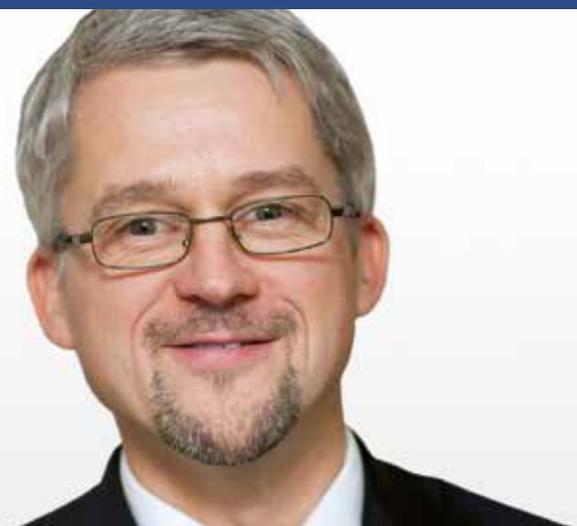
In 1995 telc gGmbH became a full member of the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE). ALTE is an association of recognized language testing organisations (examination providers) from over 20 European countries.

ALTE is committed to upholding high quality standards for language examinations. The quality profile of the telc examination formats corresponds to the criteria developed by ALTE and is subject to regular checks by the members of ALTE themselves, and in addition to external audits.



„Ten languages from a single test provider – this is only possible with telc.“

Jürgen Keicher, Managing Director of telc gGmbH



What we can do for you

Do you want to know how you can go about introducing telc Language Certificates into your company?

We would be glad to advise you on the following:

- Placement tests for your employees
- Involving the employee representatives
- Special offers for your apprentices or trainees
- How acquiring a language certificate motivates your employees
- Language testing in an assessment centre

We can also give you information about ways in which the cost of courses and examination fees can be subsidised or reimbursed by the Federal German Government. Employees can take advantage of the following programmes: ESF-BAMF, Bildungsgutschein, Bildungsprämie/Bildungsscheck/Qualifizierungsscheck and WeGebAU.

For further information and to find a telc Examination Centre near you please go to www.telc.net.

*Some of our corporate partners:
Best references from the world of business*



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www.telc.net

*Some of our cooperation partners:
Best references from the educational sector*



telc gGmbH

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Germany

The CEFR ABCs of Language Competence on page 4–5 can be ordered as a poster from telc gGmbH. Mock examinations are also available free of charge. More information about our language certificates can be found at www.telc.net.

