

Framework UNlcert® 2017

Preamble

Closer ties within the European Union, joint mobility programmes, and increasing international scientific and economic interdependence all strongly underline the need for university graduates of **all** disciplines – not only those dealing primarily with languages – to be equipped with practicable and effective language competencies. With this goal in mind, many attempts have been made to create appropriate training qualification programmes, although these have usually been limited to specific languages, specific academic profiles and/or the requirements of specific educational institutions; the resulting qualifications have thus been limited in their validity. The frameworks created by the German Association of Language Centres (*AKS*) in 1990 and the German University Rectors' Conference (*HRK*) in 1991 were important steps on the way to a comprehensive university-specific training and certification system for modern languages. This goal was achieved in 1992 with the creation of a framework for the comprehensive training and certification system "UNlcert®", the updated version of which is presented in this document.

The UNlcert® programme is a foreign language training programme that is specifically tailored to the needs of those in higher education, i.e. it takes into account the special requirements and learning approaches of learners with an academic background and the objectives of higher education establishments. The programme is oriented around the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)¹. The aim of the UNlcert® training programme goes far beyond only the teaching of foreign language skills to survive abroad. It also aims to prepare learners to study at home or abroad, for an internship abroad and for life after, be it in the economic, public or private sector. In this respect, the awarding of certificates for the successful completion of particular stages of the language learning programme is important, since these certificates are an incentive to students to take advantage of such learning programmes.

The UNlcert® framework is the result of a consensus amongst a number of higher education establishments in German-speaking countries and many years of experience in working with the UNlcert® concept. The certificates described in this framework may be awarded only by UNlcert®-accredited institutions that adhere to the guidelines in this document. Accreditation is not restricted to German-speaking countries. The certificates are issued under the auspices of the *AKS*, the German Association of Language Centres, represented by the UNlcert® Executive Committee. UNlcert®-accredited institutions retain the right to develop or offer other language programmes (possibly leading to other internal or external awards) parallel to the UNlcert® certification.

¹ See Appendix 1: "UNlcert® and the Council of Europe Levels of Language Competence".

I. The Training Programme and its Aims

1. Aims of the training programme

The aims of the UNlcert® system of foreign language training are:

(a) to equip students with the linguistic tools to deal with typical professional and academic situations as encountered in the context of higher education both in Germany and in countries where the target language is spoken. This includes familiarity with intercultural issues in general as well as culture-specific factors relating to the destination country in particular [mobility].

(b) to prepare students for the linguistic demands of academic professions at home and abroad. This includes a certain introduction into language for specific purposes in particular academic or scientific fields.

Students should be equipped to have a certain general academic language at their disposal in order to be able to understand as well as to convey scientific findings, and they should be seen to be competent in their subject area by international representatives of the subject area in a native language context. General academic language is understood here in a broad sense as the language of communication in academic contexts and at universities, the communication between researchers at conferences and in academic daily life, as well as the language of publications with their (subject) specific usages and respective terminology.

2. The system of levels

In accordance with the above aims, the UNlcert® system certifies university-specific foreign language abilities at four distinct levels which correspond to appropriate sections of the training programme. In particular for languages which differ considerably in structure from German, such as Slavic or non-Indo-European languages, the first part of UNlcert® Level I may be certified separately as UNlcert® Basis.

3. The four UNlcert® levels and their learning objectives²

The four levels cover the complete spectrum from complete beginners to near-native learners.

UNlcert® Level I is an introductory programme comprising a minimum of 168 teaching periods³ or a total student workload of 360 hours⁴, and provides for an initial academic or scientific orientation and concentrates on general communicative ability and intercultural awareness. It conveys a basic knowledge sufficient to permit learners with no previous knowledge of a language to continue their study of the language on their own. Upon completion of this level, students are able to tackle the simple challenges in academic and professional fields as well as cope with the daily challenges of life in the target country. This level does not, however, suffice in order to be able to work or study in the target country. This level

² See Appendix 2 for a comprehensive description of the UNlcert® levels.

³ In this English version of the framework, classroom teaching periods are calculated from the German based on the typical semester of 14 weeks' class contact for language centres and a teaching period of 45 minutes. Thus, a course of 56 teaching periods correspond to eight periods per week over a semester, 112 periods correspond to 8 periods per week, 168 periods correspond to 12 periods per week, and so on.

⁴ A higher teaching volume may be necessary for students to achieve the standards required by the respective UNlcert®-levels (especially levels I and II), depending on the language concerned and its relationship to German or the language of tuition. Under no circumstances should the training programme comprise fewer than 112 teaching periods (see below).

is oriented towards level B1 ("Threshold") of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

The training programme leading up to UNICert® I may be divided into two sections, with one comprising a minimum of approx.120 and the other a minimum of approx. 60 teaching periods, whereby the first of these sections may be certified separately as **UNICert® Basis**⁵. To achieve this level, the training programme should consist of a teaching volume of a minimum of 112 teaching periods plus appropriate preparation and follow-up study, or alternatively a total student workload of 240 hours. Appropriately justified exceptions may be made, under consideration of the degree of difference between the native and target languages as well as the didactic and methodological concept. The preparatory level "UNICert® Basis" is oriented towards level A2 ("Waystage") of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

UNICert® Level II also generally comprises 112-168 teaching periods or a total student workload of 240 hours⁶ and provides for further academic or scientific orientation, including the possibility of a "language for special purposes" option (e.g. economics, law, humanities, engineering, medicine). This level leads to a basic ability to communicate appropriately in typical situations at university and work and constitutes the lowest level of mobility for short academic related trips (e.g. a short study programme, an internship). This level is oriented towards level B2 ("Vantage") of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

UNICert® Level III also requires 112-168 teaching periods or 240-360 hours total student workload and continues the format of UNICert® Level II at a more academically demanding level. At this level students should have a reasonable academic and situation appropriate communicative ability in the target language to be fully capable of meeting the linguistic requirements of a work placement or period of study in the country of the target language without the need for additional explicit language training. UNICert® Level III is therefore the recommended level of mobility for an academic stay abroad (study, internship, temporary work placement, etc.). This level is oriented towards level C1 ("Effective Operational Proficiency") of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

UNICert® Level IV again encompasses 112-168 teaching periods or a minimum of 240-360 hours total student workload⁷ and leads to a highly advanced level of foreign language competence as is expected of professional people with an academic background. Courses at this level are designed for students who have already gained considerable experience abroad (in particular returnees to the programme). The target level of linguistic competence at this level enables the learner to respond to scientific questions in a complex and differentiated manner and to develop an appropriate academic communicative ability in specific subject-related contexts, corresponding to the specialised demands of particular degree programmes. This level is oriented towards level C2 ("Mastery") of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

⁵ An institution need not necessarily be accredited to issue certificates for the complete UNICert® Level I in a particular language in order to qualify to award the UNICert® Basis certificate. It is, however, desirable and should be the aim of the institution concerned.

⁶ A higher teaching volume may also be necessary for students to achieve the standards required by UNICert® Level II, depending on the language concerned and its relationship to German or the language of tuition. Under no circumstances should the training programme comprise fewer than 112 teaching periods.

⁷ A higher teaching volume may also be necessary for students to achieve the standards required by UNICert® Level IV, depending on the language concerned and its relationship to German or other L1. Under no circumstances should the training programme comprise fewer than 112 teaching periods.

An overview of the UNlcert® system

Course Programme		Classroom teaching periods ⁸		End of Course Procedure		Orientation towards CEFR level	
Level IV		112-168		Examination		C2 (Mastery)	
Level III		112-168		Examination		C1 (Effective Operational Proficiency)	
Level II		112-168		Cumulative or Examination		B2 (Vantage)	
Level I	Level I	Minimum 168	Minimum 56	Cumulative or Examination	Cumulative or Examination	B1 (Threshold)	B1 (Threshold)
	UNlcert® Basis		Minimum 112		Cumulative or Examination		A2 (Waystage)

4. Length of the training programme

The range of tolerance for the number of classroom teaching periods at each level (a minimum of 168 at Level I and generally 112-168 for Levels II to IV⁷) allows individual institutions the opportunity to take into account the specific learning circumstances of their students and in particular the specific requirements of certain languages⁹. Similarly, individual institutions will test and implement a variety of organisational forms for the provision of language tuition (courses during the semester, block courses, intensive courses, independent study phases, blended learning courses, immersion courses etc.)¹⁰.

To adapt to local circumstances, several UNlcert® levels may be incorporated into a single training programme without awarding certificates at the intermediate level(s), e.g. level II after 280 teaching periods, without a separate qualification at level I.

⁸ In this English version of the framework, classroom teaching periods are calculated from the German based on the typical semester of 14 weeks' class contact for language centres and a teaching period of 45 minutes. Thus, a course of 56 teaching periods correspond to eight periods per week over a semester, 112 periods correspond to 8 periods per week, 168 periods correspond to 12 periods per week, and so on.

⁹ Depending upon the relationship of the native language (L₁) to the target language (L₂) and on the teaching methodology, there may be differences in the volume of teaching required to reach a particular level. In addition, accredited institutions are not required to offer all languages at all levels. Thus, languages in which students already have considerable prior knowledge may be offered only at the higher levels, whereas the training programmes in other languages may place emphasis on the lower levels. Please see the recommendations on the length of the training programmes in Appendix 3.

¹⁰ Language learning at higher education institutions generally takes place by means of a combination of face-to-face teacher-student classes and independent study. The average length of between 112 and 168 teaching periods refers here to face-to-face teacher-student contact. These contact periods may be replaced in part by autonomous or semi-autonomous learning or blended learning when the autonomous or semi-autonomous learning components meet the following criteria: the relationship of the autonomous or semi-autonomous components to the overall programme is clearly set out; the components form part of the official curriculum; the components are supervised by a teacher; they are documented and quantified by learners and teachers; they involve identifiable learning progression.

The European Language Portfolio may be a useful tool to guide and support students in their independent language learning phases. In particular, it can increase students' ability to assess their own language abilities.

5. Recognition of prior qualifications

Appropriate regulations for direct entry to later stages of the UNlcert® programme must be clearly stated, (e.g. recognition of studies or qualifications completed at other institutions, placement tests, etc.) In exceptional cases the institution's examination committee should make the final decision.

The following minimum standards are required for admission to the UNlcert® examinations:

At Levels I and II (as well as UNlcert® Basis), participation in at least the final course of a particular level is required in addition to appropriately-validated prior knowledge which exempts the candidate from earlier courses).

At Levels III and IV, participation in a minimum of 50% of the training programme at the given level is required in addition to appropriately-validated prior knowledge which exempts the candidate from the other 50%).

Entry to later stages of the training programme requires assessment of prior knowledge (e.g. by means of a placement test). Such assessment does not lead to UNlcert® certification at levels lower than the level at which the candidate is entering the programme.

The principles of these regulations also apply to all other students whose language ability is not above the level of a complete beginner.

II. Examinations

6. Conclusion and assessment of each level

At UNlcert® Levels I (including UNlcert® Basis) and II, institutions are free to choose the method of assessment which produces the final grade. This may be reached either by means of continuous assessment on the basis of final assessments in the individual courses or alternatively a formal separate examination at the end of the level. UNlcert® Levels III and IV are concluded by means of a separate UNlcert® examination (in addition to examinations at the end of individual courses). All examinations that lead to the culmination of a level, and thus to acquiring a certificate, are carried out by the institution according to specific guidelines regardless of level and language

UNlcert® explicitly welcomes formative assessment within a level and also supports other examination procedures, e.g. portfolio examinations.

7. Cumulative assessment

Cumulative assessment may be achieved by the accumulation of final grades in a number of sections of the training programme or through the accumulation of assessments carried out in the final section of each level. When awarding grades by means of cumulative assessment, all four skills (reading comprehension, listening comprehension, writing and speaking) must be assessed during the final section of each level and each must be passed in order for an overall pass to be awarded for that level.

Each grade may be used only once as part of a grade for a UNICert® certificate, i.e. grades which have been achieved at beginner's level and which have been used to calculate a grade for UNICert® Basis may no longer be used to calculate a grade for certification at UNICert® Level I.¹¹

8. Task-based approach in examinations

Examinations should preferably follow a task-based concept at all levels (but at least from Level II) which present examination tasks in practical contexts and are based on competences and not language knowledge. All examinations (at the end of a course or level, or separate) are to test all four skills (reading comprehension, listening comprehension, writing and speaking) which should be weighted evenly in scope and level of difficulty. A candidate must achieve a pass grade in each of the four skills in order to be awarded an overall pass at a particular level (see Restriction Clause (point 11)). The four skills may be examined in separate examination sections or may be examined together in appropriate logical combinations.

9. Admission to the examinations

Qualification for admission to the examinations is generally based on a qualitative and quantitative minimum level of participation in the classes required at the appropriate level of the course programme. The quantitative minimum participation is generally established at 75% of each course taken.

10. Duration of examinations

The **total length of examinations** at each individual level (allowing for a margin of +/- 10% for Levels I and II) is as follows¹². (The following are simply examples and can be adjusted by each institution, see also the example Examination Regulations).

UNICert® Basis (in total approx. 90 minutes): e.g. listening comprehension approx. 15 mins (including the playing of the recording), reading comprehension approx. 30 mins, writing approx. 35 mins, speaking approx. 10 mins.

UNICert® Level I (in total approx. 100 minutes): e.g. listening comprehension approx. 20 mins, reading comprehension approx. 35 mins, writing approx. 35 mins, speaking approx. 10 mins

UNICert® Level II (in total approx. 150 minutes): e.g. listening comprehension approx. 30 mins, reading comprehension approx. 50 mins, writing approx. 50 mins (possible as a portfolio examination), speaking approx. 20 mins. (possible as a portfolio examination)

UNICert® Level III (in total a minimum of 200 minutes): e.g. listening comprehension approx. 45 mins, reading comprehension approx. 60 mins, writing approx. 90 mins, speaking approx. 30 mins.

UNICert® Level IV (in total a minimum of 300 minutes): e.g. listening comprehension approx. 60 mins, reading comprehension approx. 90 mins, writing approx. 120 mins, speaking approx. 30 mins.

¹¹ See also the UNICert® Commission's regulations on cumulative assessment (available as an [information sheet in German](#)).

¹² For examples of options for the duration of individual examination sections, please see the suggestions in the UNICert® [Example Examination Regulations](#).

In the UNlcert® examinations the different skills can also be combined; as a result the time management becomes the student's responsibility. The skills are, however, still tested and assessed separately. If the examination includes research tasks, the total length of the examination will be longer.

All sections of the examinations are to be counted equally (without prior rounding up or down) towards the final grade. This final grade will then be rounded up or down to one of the grades listed in the relevant examination regulations.¹³

11. Restriction clause

Unsatisfactory examination performance in one of the four skills may not be compensated for by better performance in other examination sections, i.e. the candidate must achieve at least the pass grade "satisfactory" in each section.

12. Inclusion of coursework grades

At Levels III and IV, grades from earlier pieces of work appropriate to the subject area/specialisation may be included in the final certificate grade. Such work may be a case study (in law, for example), a dossier or business plan (in business studies), project work (in the humanities and social sciences) or a presentation. The grade for such coursework may be combined from grades for a number of such pieces of work. The proportion of such coursework grades in the final certificate grade must not exceed 30%

III. Implementation

13. Development of programme regulations and examination regulations

The individual UNlcert®-accredited institutions are to devise and develop their own programme details (course programme regulations, examination regulations¹⁴, etc.) in accordance with this framework and in consultation with members of the UNlcert® Executive Committee. This provision permits a degree of variation in programmes and regulations, which may be adapted to local factors and the priorities of individual institutions. The institutions themselves are responsible for conducting the examinations and for the placement of course participants in the appropriate course level. However, the UNlcert® Executive Committee is always at hand to offer advice or to act as 'quality controller'.

14. Institutional requirements

In order to be accredited to issue UNlcert® certificates, institutions must – in addition to providing the usual organisational conditions (equipment, rooms, personnel) necessary for the day-to-day running of a higher education establishment – fulfil the following special criteria for the provision of language tuition and examinations:

¹³ The regulations in point 10 are valid for both UNlcert® examinations as well as for cumulative assessment.

¹⁴ Please see the [UNlcert® Example Examination Regulations](#) for further information.

- 1 Tuition must be organised and undertaken by departments responsible for the provision of language training specific to higher education institutes;
- 2 Classes must in the main be conducted by salaried personnel who are qualified to teach foreign languages; freelance teachers must have a regular contact person¹⁵ within the institution.
- 3 Group size must not exceed 25 participants.
- 4 Every examination task in UNlcert® examinations (end-of-level examinations) must be assessed by a minimum of two examiners.
- 5 Training and examination must meet the quantitative and qualitative minimum standards for higher education language teaching set by the UNlcert® Executive Committee.

¹⁵ A **regular contact person** here means a staff member who is qualified in teaching, who is familiar with the language and culture of the target language and who is also firmly connected with the institution and its organisational practices. In individual cases the UNlcert® Executive Committee reserves the right to make the final decision based upon an analysis of the particular situation.

UNlcert® and the Council of Europe Levels of Language Competence

Appendix 1 to the UNlcert® Framework

The following table shows the relationships between the UNlcert® levels and the levels in the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), that is, the CEFR levels have been adapted to the contexts of higher education and graduate professions. A detailed description of the UNlcert® Levels can be found in Appendix 2.

Based on:

Council of Europe / Conseil de l'Europe, *Modern Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. A Common European Framework of Reference*, Strasbourg 1998.

Th. Barth / E.-M. Huschka, "Beschreibung der Leistungsstufen", in: K.-H. Eggensperger / J. Fischer, *Handbuch UNlcert®*, Bochum 1998, 81-91.

Council of Europe Level	Language Competence: Description of levels according to the CEFR, adapted for UNlcert®	UNlcert®-Level
BASIC USER		
A 1 Breakthrough	<p>Listening: He/she can recognise basic vocabulary items and simple utterances relating to familiar topics, provided they are spoken slowly and clearly.</p> <p>Speaking: He/she can make him/herself understood on familiar topics using simple structures and vocabulary.</p> <p>Reading: He/she can understand familiar names, terms and very simple sentence structures, such as those on public notices, on posters or in catalogues.</p> <p>Writing: He/she can write a short simple email and can complete forms with his/her personal details.</p>	--
A 2 Waystage	<p>Listening: He/she can understand straightforward information and the most common expressions within a known subject area as well as the main information in simple messages.</p> <p>Speaking: He/she can call upon a limited number of expressions and phrases in order to describe other people, living conditions / housing situations and university / studies etc. and can communicate briefly and simply in everyday situations.</p> <p>Reading: He/she can understand short simple texts and can extract information from simple texts on everyday topics.</p> <p>Writing: He/she can compose simple messages and notes.</p>	approx. UNlcert® Basis (preparatory stage of Level I)

Council of Europe Level	Language Competence: Description of levels according to the CEFR, adapted for UNlcert®	UNlcert®-Level
INDEPENDENT USER		
B 1 Threshold	<p>Listening: He/she can understand the main information on familiar topics when clearly spoken in standard language.</p> <p>Speaking: He/she can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe his/her experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions. He/she can communicate with others on everyday topics and can use basic grammatical structures and an adequate, though limited, vocabulary range.</p> <p>Reading: He/she can understand texts that consist mainly of high-frequency everyday or work-related language. He/she can understand the main points of simple texts.</p> <p>Writing: He/she can compose texts on matters of general interest and can thereby use the most important grammatical structures and basic vocabulary.</p>	approx. UNlcert® I
B 2 Vantage	<p>Listening: He/she can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. He/she can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes.</p> <p>Speaking: He/she can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to his/her field of interest. He/she can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options. He/she can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible.</p> <p>Reading: B2 He/she can read articles and reports of intermediate level of difficulty with a limited general and subject-specific vocabulary. He/she can understand key information, viewpoints and specific details.</p> <p>Writing: He/she can compose detailed, easy-to-understand texts on a variety of subjects relating to his/her personal interests. He/she can write texts in the context of his/her field of study and use a certain degree of complex language structures and subject-specific vocabulary.</p>	approx. UNlcert® II

Council of Europe Level	Language Competence: Description of levels according to the CEFR, adapted for UNlcert [®]	UNlcert [®] -Level
PROFICIENT USER		
C 1 Effective Operational Proficiency	<p>Listening: He/she can understand difficult extended authentic speech on general and specialised topics, even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled. He/she can understand television programmes and films without too much effort and can follow lectures.</p> <p>Speaking: He/she can express him/herself fluently, can make presentations on topics relating to his/her degree subject and express his/her opinion on these topics. He/she can use complex grammatical structures and a wide range of general and subject-specific vocabulary. He/she is familiar with the idiomatic expressions necessary for study abroad. He/she can make presentations in which he/she can explain graphics, diagrams and tables.</p> <p>Reading: He/she can understand long and complex authentic texts and through careful reading can understand both implicit and explicit information. He/she can understand specialised articles relating to his/her field of study and is familiar with the specialist vocabulary in his/her field. He/she is able to deal with texts relevant to study abroad.</p> <p>Writing: He/she can express him/herself on general and specialised topics in correct, clearly-structured and easy-to-understand texts and can thereby express his/her opinion at length in a confident, personally relevant way which is tailored to the given audience.</p>	approx. UNlcert [®] III

<p>C 2 Mastery</p>	<p>Listening: He/she can understand complex utterances in authentic situations, including abstract and very specific content. He/she can understand highly-specialised subject-specific terminology and can recognise implied meaning and fine stylistic nuances.</p> <p>Speaking: He/she can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion with both native and non-native speakers and express him/herself without any difficulty. He/she can restructure and paraphrase his/her utterances when this is necessary for better understanding. He/she can present content logically and according to the target-language standards for an academic presentation. He/she can use with ease a variety of linguistic styles and registers.</p> <p>Reading: He/she can understand very long, complex, abstract authentic texts on both general and subject-specific topics. He/she can understand implied meaning and nuances and can identify the level of formality, style and register.</p> <p>Writing: He/she can compose detailed, logically structured, coherent texts on specialised subjects and can use a wide range of differentiated, subject-specific vocabulary. The texts produced comply with the conventions of the target language and convey the writer's meaning and opinion logically and convincingly.</p>	<p>approx. UNlcert® IV</p>
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Detailed Description of the UNlcert® Levels

Appendix 2 to the UNlcert® Framework

(to be included on the reverse of certificates)

UNlcert® Basis – General Language/Language for Academic Purposes

A language certificate at the level UNlcert® Basis attests to successful participation in the higher-education-foreign language training programme UNlcert® Basis (preparatory stage of UNlcert® Level I) comprising approx. XXX classroom hours (approx. XXX hours' workload). The holder of this certificate has – depending on the grade awarded – acquired the initial basic skills necessary for direct exchange of information in routine situations.

He/she understands spoken and written sentences and frequently-used expressions relating to general or study-related subjects. He/she is able to give information on selected topics of direct relevance (e.g. background, education and training, family, personal situation) using basic language structures. He/she has also acquired basic intercultural skills within this spectrum.

The level of achievement designated by the UNlcert® Basis certificate is orientated towards level A2 "Waystage" of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

UNlcert® Level I – General Language/Language for Academic Purposes

A language certificate at UNlcert® Level I attests to successful participation in the higher-education foreign-language training programme UNlcert® Level I comprising approx. XXX classroom hours (approx. XXX hours' workload). The holder of this certificate has – depending on the grade awarded – achieved the basic skills necessary to communicate in the most important common situations in student and everyday life and will have developed learning strategies for future independent language learning.

He/she can read and listen to general and study-related language and understand the main information on everyday subjects of general or academic interest. He/she can express him/herself and engage in communication orally and in writing on topics of general interest and on his/her personal and educational situation using basic expressions, structures and a solid vocabulary base. He/she is familiar with a variety of cultural factors.

The level of achievement designated by the UNlcert® Level I certificate is orientated towards level B1 "Threshold" of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

UNlcert® Level II – General Language/Language for Academic Purposes

A language certificate at UNlcert® Level II attests to successful participation in the higher-education foreign-language training programme UNlcert® Level II comprising approx. XXX classroom hours (approx. XXX hours' workload). The holder of this certificate has – depending on the grade awarded – acquired the necessary basic command of the language to enable him or her to work or study in a country of the target language (basic student mobility level).

He/she understands the main content of general, professional and academic texts with general vocabulary or a certain degree of specialised vocabulary from his/her field of study such as encountered

in speeches and lectures as well as in longer texts of medium difficulty. He/she can express him/herself appropriately both in writing and speaking on a variety of cultural and subject-specific topics and participate actively in such discussions, making some use of complex sentence structures and subject-specific vocabulary. Within this field he/she has gained sociocultural awareness and intercultural skills.

The level of achievement designated by the UNlcert® Level II certificate is orientated towards level B2 "Vantage" of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

UNlcert® Level II – Language for Specific Purposes

This certificate is based on the successful completion of a university-specific language programme at UNlcert® Level II (approx. xxx teaching units / total workload approx. xxx hours). In relation to the grades achieved, the holder of the certificate has acquired the necessary basic command of the language to enable him/her to work or study in a country of the target language (basic student mobility level).

He/she understands the main content of general, professional and academic texts with general vocabulary or vocabulary from his/her field of study such as encountered in speeches and lectures as well as in longer texts of medium difficulty. He/she can express himself/herself appropriately both in writing and in speaking on a variety of cultural and subject-specific topics and participate actively in such discussions making some use of complex sentence structures and subject-specific vocabulary. Within this field he/she has gained sociocultural awareness and intercultural skills.

optional: In the field of XXX he/she has a command of the necessary lexis and structures, in particular in the special topic(s) of XXX, and can demonstrate the necessary subject knowledge and skills appropriate to this field.

This certificate has been accredited by The German Association of Language Centres (AKS) as a UNlcert® Level II certificate (within the UNlcert® system of four distinct levels I – IV, incl. the preliminary level Basis). The level of achievement designated by the UNlcert® Level II certificate is oriented towards Level B2 "Vantage" of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

UNlcert® Level III – General Language/Language for Academic Purposes

A language certificate at UNlcert® Level III attests to successful participation in the higher-education foreign-language training programme UNlcert® Level III comprising approx. XXX classroom hours (approx. XXX hours' workload). The holder of this certificate has – depending on the grade awarded – acquired a degree of language proficiency which enables him or her to work or study with ease, i.e. without any need for further explicit language instruction, in a country using the target language (recommended student mobility level).

He/she is proficient in general, academic and professional language which enables him/her to communicate easily with others, demonstrating flexibility and variety in his or her modes of expression. He/she can understand the vocabulary and structures of demanding, extensive, original written and spoken materials on general topics as well as on those related to his or her intended profession, can comprehend both explicit and implicit information and understand the content of presentations and lectures in detail. He/she can express him/herself fluently and effectively both in speech and writing on a range of complex topics relevant to his or her field of study within the context of his or her work and

study abroad, making use of sophisticated structures and an extensive range of general and specialised vocabulary. He/she can express his/her own views coherently, cohesively, logically and in a stylistically appropriate manner. He/she can apply his/her sociocultural knowledge accordingly. In an intercultural context he/she acts naturally and confidently.

The level of achievement designated by the UNlcert® Level III certificate is orientated towards level C1 “Effective Operational Proficiency” of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

UNlcert® Level III – Language for Specific Purposes

A language certificate at UNlcert® Level III attests to successful participation in the higher-education foreign-language training programme UNlcert® Level III comprising approx. XXX classroom hours (approx. XXX hours’ workload). The holder of this certificate has – depending on the grade awarded – acquired a degree of language proficiency which enables him or her to work or study with ease, i.e. without any need for further explicit language instruction, in a country using the target language (recommended student mobility level).

He/she is proficient in general, academic and professional language which enables him/her to communicate easily with others, demonstrating flexibility and variety in his or her modes of expression. He/she can understand the vocabulary and structures of demanding, extensive, original written and spoken materials on general topics as well as on those related to his or her intended profession, can comprehend both explicit and implicit information and understand the content of presentations and lectures in detail. He/she can express him/herself fluently and effectively both in speech and writing on a range of complex topics relevant to his or her field of study within the context of his or her work and study abroad, making use of sophisticated structures and an extensive range of general and specialised vocabulary. He/she can express his/her own views coherently, cohesively, logically and in a stylistically appropriate manner. He/she can apply his/her sociocultural knowledge accordingly. In an intercultural context he/she acts naturally and confidently.

optional: He/she has a command of the lexis and structures required by his/her specialised field of XXX and can demonstrate the necessary subject knowledge and skills appropriate to this field.

The level of achievement designated by the UNlcert® Level III certificate is orientated towards level C1 “Effective Operational Proficiency” of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

UNlcert® Level IV – General Language/Language for Academic Purposes

A language certificate at UNlcert® Level IV attests to successful participation in the higher-education foreign-language training programme UNlcert® Level IV comprising approx. XXX classroom hours (approx. XXX hours’ workload).

The holder of this certificate has acquired general and subject-specific language knowledge and skills to a high professional standard and has a high communicative competence in the foreign language at a level which approaches that of an educated native speaker and which enables him/her to react appropriately in general, academic, professional and subject-specific situations. He/she is well

acquainted with the cultural particulars of the target country, so that he/she is able to communicate spontaneously and effortlessly with members of the target culture.

He/she can understand long and complex general and subject-specific utterances on a wide variety of topics and can understand longer spoken contributions in the original language which contain sophisticated lexis and structures; he/she can identify the tone and level of formality in such utterances and is also familiar with the specific terminology and idioms related to his/her field of study. He/she can take part in sophisticated and complex conversations, discussions and debates without linguistic limitations and can make long and coherent written and oral contributions on subjects of all kinds. He/she can speak fluently on a wide variety of topics, making use of an extensive range of vocabulary and language structures, can produce and deliver coherent and logically-structured presentations and can prepare an academic paper, expressing his/her personal opinion logically and convincingly using appropriate argumentation and expressing finer shades of meaning. Due to his/her sociocultural awareness he/she can convincingly assess situations of an intercultural context and can effectively act as mediator.

The level of achievement designated by the UNlcert® Level IV certificate is orientated towards level C2 "Mastery" of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

UNlcert® Level IV – Language for Specific Purposes

A language certificate at UNlcert® Level IV attests to successful participation in the higher-education foreign-language training programme UNlcert® Level IV comprising approx. XXX classroom hours (approx. XXX hours' workload).

The holder of this certificate has acquired general and subject-specific language knowledge and skills to a high professional standard and has a high communicative competence in the foreign language at a level which approaches that of an educated native speaker and which enables him/her to react appropriately in general, academic, professional and subject-specific situations. He/she is well acquainted with the cultural particulars of the target country, so that he/she is able to communicate spontaneously and effortlessly with members of the target culture.

He/she can understand long and complex general and subject-specific utterances on a wide variety of topics and can understand longer spoken contributions in the original language which contain sophisticated lexis and structures; he/she can identify the tone and level of formality in such utterances and is also familiar with the specific terminology and idioms related to his/her field of study. He/she can take part in sophisticated and complex conversations, discussions and debates without linguistic limitations and can make long and coherent written and oral contributions on subjects of all kinds. He/she can speak fluently on a wide variety of topics, making use of an extensive range of vocabulary and language structures, can produce and deliver coherent and logically-structured presentations and can prepare an academic paper, expressing his/her personal opinion logically and convincingly using appropriate argumentation and expressing finer shades of meaning. Due to his/her sociocultural awareness he/she can convincingly assess situations of an intercultural context and can effectively act as mediator.

optional: He/she has a command of the lexis and structures required by his/her specialised field of XXX, in particular in the sub-specialisations of XXX and can demonstrate the necessary subject knowledge and skills appropriate to this field.

The level of achievement designated by the UNlcert® Level IV certificate is orientated towards level C2 "Mastery" of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Recommendations on the length of training programmes for languages requiring a higher teaching volume

Appendix 3 to the UNICert® Framework

Recommendations for languages for which a higher volume of teaching should be planned:¹⁵

	UNICert® I in total – the following represent the usual minimum classroom teaching periods	Division of tuition between UNICert® Basis & continuation programme to UNICert® I	Usual minimum further classroom teaching periods required to achieve UNICert® II
Slavic Languages	224	140 + 84	168
Modern Greek	224	140 + 84	168
Chinese	280	168 + 112	168
Japanese	280	168 + 112	168
Arabic	280	168 + 112	168
Turkish/Finnish/ Hungarian	280	168 + 112	168
Dutch	140	--	168
Swedish	140	--	168

¹⁵ In this English version of the framework, classroom teaching periods are calculated from the German based on a typical semester of 14 weeks' class contact and a teaching period of 45 minutes. Thus, a course of 56 teaching periods correspond to eight periods per week over a semester, 112 periods correspond to 8 periods per week, 168 periods correspond to 12 periods per week, and so on.