Baltic International Academy
Foreign Language Centre and ECL Certification

The Baltic International Academy Foreign Language Centre and ECL Certification (BIA FLC), based in the Written Translation and Interpretation Program at the Baltic International Academy, is the official ECL Certification Centre in Latvia that administers ECL examinations as well as conducts ECL examination. ECL examinations are foreign language examinations of the European Consortium for the Certificate of Attainment in Modern Languages (http://www.ecl-test.com).

History

The European Consortium for the Certificate of Attainment in Modern Languages (ECL) was established in 1992 as a response to the EU policy of member state expansion. Until 1999, the University of London Examination and Assessment Council was the coordinator and the main examination centre of the Consortium and since then the Consortium coordinator has been the University of Pech Foreign Language Centre, Hungary. Today, ECL centres are open in 17 countries in Europe, the USA, Argentina and Russia.

Aim of Examination

The main aim of ECL is the development and implementation of a uniform system of modern language proficiency level testing and certification for all EU member states. The ECL testing system was developed with the help of the ERASMUS and LINGUA programs. ECL certificates are recognized by all EU states and do not require any additional recognition by any individual member state.

Structure of Examination

The examination has three forms – complex (oral + written), oral and written – and a candidate can choose any of these three forms of the examination. The oral part of the examination consists of a dialogue and monologue on a provided topic with the visual support of a picture/s as well as listening. The written part includes reading and writing tasks.
The complex examination proceeds over the period of two days. On Day 1 a candidate completes the written part as well as listening. Immediately upon the completion of the written part, it is posted to the Administrative Office of the ECL Consortium. On Day 2 a candidate completes the oral part of the examination.

If a candidate decides to complete only the written part of the examination, s/he completes the written part of the complex examination, specifically, the reading and writing components.

If a candidate decided to complete only the oral part of the examination, s/he must complete the listening component of the examination during the written part and then s/he must engage in the oral part per se. The examination board consists of two members and during the oral examination, one member facilitates the production of dialogues and monologues by the candidates, whereas another member records the candidates’ answers and writes down their errors. The entire exam is tape-recorded. Upon the completion of this part, the recording is immediately posted to the Administrative Office of the ECL Consortium.

Characteristics of Examination

The content and size of examination have been determined by serious scientific research and outcomes of pilot testing in experimental groups. One characteristics of this system of testing is the maximum approximation to the conditions of real communication at work and in educational settings that exist in contemporary Europe. Testing is based on the European system of foreign language proficiency levels (A2, B1, B2, C1).

Prior to taking the examination, a candidate must decide which foreign language proficiency level his/her foreign language knowledge corresponds to. To be able to apply for a proper language proficiency level, a candidate must study relevant information at http://www.ecl-test.com. Alternatively, a candidate can consult his/her foreign language instructor on this matter. The examination application must contain information on the foreign language proficiency level that the candidate desires to be tested for. The assessment of the examination results will be conducted according to the foreign language proficiency level indicated in the application form. Neither lower nor higher proficiency levels can be awarded.

The ECL examination assesses language skills of written and oral communication that proceeds in standard professional and general situations at various degrees of complexity depending on a language proficiency level. The examination does not contain a separate section that tests the knowledge of grammar. To increase the likelihood of passing the examination, each examination section contains two tasks on different subjects. Thus, if a candidate does not satisfactory complete the first task, s/he can still demonstrate his/her foreign language expertise in the second task on a different subject.

Assessment of Examination Results

The examination tests four areas of language skills – reading, writing, listening and speaking skills (4 sub-tests). The maximum number of points that a candidate can score for each sub-test is 25. In order to receive a certificate, a candidate must successfully complete at least 40% of each sub-test and at least 60% in each partial examination. The certificate will contain information on the percentage of the successfully completed tasks. In case of the successful completion of the written part only, the certificate only for the written part will be issued. Similarly, in case of the successful completion of the oral part only, the certificate only for the oral part will be issued.
Validity and Reliability of Examination

All level examinations and their assessment system have been verified on longitudinal experimental research data on the basis of which reliable and effective standards of identification of the real level of foreign language expertise have been developed. Developers and examiners of the tests (examination components) have received specialized training related to the structure of these tests and tests procedures.

The tests are developed and subsequently assessed at prestigious higher education institutions that are native to the language the knowledge of which is to be tested. The information about these higher education institutions can be accessed at http://www.ecl-test.com. All examination tasks are experimentally verified prior to their inclusion into the tests. The committee that organizes examination and assesses examination results is responsible for tailoring the questions that are asked during examination and assessment procedures to meet ECL standards.

A mock written examination (online mock test) can be completed online on the ECL website, whereas a mock oral examination can be arranged to be taken at the Baltic International Academy Foreign Language Centre and ECL Certification. The mock oral examination is usually offered around the time of training sessions, which occur a week prior to real examination.

Languages of Examination

The Baltic International Academy Foreign Language Centre and ECL Certification of the offers ECL CONSORTIUM FOR THE CERTIFICATE OF ATTAINMENT IN MODERN LANGUAGES examination in the following languages: English, German, Spanish and Russian. Upon the successful completion of examination, candidates are issued certificates.

Payment

The cost of the complex exam is 80 EURO. The cost of one part (oral or written) of the examination is 48 EURO. The payment must be made in EURO:

SIA Baltijas Starptautiskā akadēmija
VAT No. LV 40003101808
AS Swedbank
Account number: LV68HABA0551003662871
Aim: ECL examination

Date of Expiration

Indefinite

Who chooses the ECL exam?

The ECL examination is for students, professionals engaged in scientific research activities and those wishing to live, work or study in European countries. This examination in contrast to other examinations, such as TOEFEL or IELTS, tests neither academic knowledge nor academic skills. This examination tests communicative language proficiency, in other words, the examination tests the level of knowledge that a candidate can demonstrate during real communicative acts. In the
context of increased international mobility, the *ECL* certificate becomes an important addition to the language portfolio.

**Why Take the ECL examination?**

- The content of the examination corresponds to the European system of foreign language proficiency levels.
- The examination provides candidates with an opportunity to receive a language certificate that can enable them to study and work abroad.
- The methods of control and assessment of examination results are valid (reliable) and appropriate.
- The examination proceeds in a friendly atmosphere.
- The examination tests communicative skills, and thus, neither grammar nor translation tasks are part of examination.
- This examination is the most affordable international examination.
- The examination does not have an expiry date.
- In case of failure, candidates can retake separately either the written or oral part.
- The network of *ECL* examination centres has been continuously expanding both in Europe and across the world.

**Dates of Examinations in 2012**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Dates and Levels (all languages)</th>
<th>Application Deadline</th>
<th>Dates of Training Session</th>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>English, German</td>
<td>April 20 – B1, C1 April 21 – B2</td>
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<td>Spanish, Russian</td>
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<td>June</td>
<td>English, German</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>English, German</td>
<td>December 7 – B1, C1 December 8 – B2</td>
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<td>Spanish, Russian</td>
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Examination Applications

In order to take the examination, candidates must register on the ECL website at http://www.ecl-test.com and send their applications to the Baltic International Academy Foreign Language and ECL Certification Centre at the at ecl.latvia@gmail.com by appropriate deadlines (see the table above).

How to Prepare for the ECL examination?

• Candidates should study the ECL related information at http://www.ecl-test.com
• The ECL website describes the European system of foreign language proficiency levels and offers mock examinations (online mock test). Candidates should study the system of foreign language proficiency levels and complete mock examinations appropriate for their level of foreign language proficiency. Depending on the results of their mock examinations, candidates will decide how they should prepare for the examination – on their own or with an assistance of a foreign language instructor.
• Candidates can prepare for the examination on their own by ordering proper textbooks from the Baltic International Academy Foreign Language Centre and ECL Certification.
• Prior to taking the examination, candidates can attend a training session, preparing for the examination, at the Foreign Language and ECL Certification Centre at the Baltic International Academy (see the dates in the table). Training sessions are typically held one week prior to examination. During the training session, candidates will receive all relevant information regarding the examination, including examination procedures. Candidates will also be offered an opportunity to take a mock oral examination.
• Candidates can also enroll in a course preparing for the examination which is delivered by the Foreign Language and ECL Certification Centre of the Baltic International Academy. We are offering courses of two types – ECL examination training courses and foreign language training courses.

Additional Information

• As. Prof. Larisa Ignatjeva, Director of the Baltic International Academy Foreign Language Centre and ECL Certification, tel. +(371) 26171355
• English Examination: Linda Ramanauska, tel. +(371) 29172059
• German Examination: Elita Donska, tel. +(371) 29456647
• Spanish Examination: Ludmila Grisle, tel. +(371) 26138762
• Russian Examination: Larisa Ignatjeva, tel. +(371) 26171355
• Courses on Methodology of Teaching of Russian as a Foreign Language (Linda Ramanauska, manager, tel. +(371) 29172059).
Main Activities of the Baltic International Academy Foreign Language Centre and ECL Certification

- Administering, testing and certification of English, German, Spanish and Russian language proficiency levels within the framework of *ECL CONSORTIUM FOR THE CERTIFICATE OF ATTAINMENT IN MODERN LANGUAGES*
- English, German, Spanish and Russian language courses
- Courses on the methodology of teaching of Russian as a Foreign Language