

## SCALING OLYMPUS: EXPLORING OFFICIAL LANGUAGE CERTIFICATIONS AT THE CEFR C2 LEVEL

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**ABSTRACT:** For many foreign language learners, passing an examination at the C2 level – the sixth and highest level of the Council of Europe’s Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) – can seem like a lofty goal. For educators, preparation requirements at this level can also be challenging, especially given common misconceptions about the degree of linguistic skill and knowledge required for candidates to complete the relevant qualification successfully. Accordingly, in first outlining the rationale and requirements for the CEFR C2 level according to the Council of Europe’s guidelines, this contribution aims to explore the official language qualifications available at this level of proficiency. As such, the range of accredited C2-level language certifications offered by institutional full members of the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) will be investigated, primarily through analysis of the relevant websites for each individual C2 qualification. In comparing and contrasting these advanced-level examinations, which are offered across a range of European languages, it is intended to offer greater insights into the varying formats, structures, and requirements of official language certifications at the C2 level. Thus, it is intended to provide practical benefits not only for educators, but also for foreign language learners and examination candidates seeking to prepare for these qualifications.

**KEYWORDS:** advanced learners, C2 proficiency, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, language proficiency, language exams, language testing

### **Introduction**

With the world becoming ever more interconnected through globalisation, the use and acquisition of foreign language skills is assuming ever greater importance. To this end, language certifications have also become increasingly valuable, be they needed for work reasons, educational purposes, or to satisfy citizenship requirements. As observed in Tabuenca-Cuevas (2016), there are currently a plethora of language qualifications available across the globe, certifying skills in dozens of different languages at across a wide spectrum of proficiency levels. Accordingly, the inspiration for this research topic arose from the author’s own interests as a language learner and an examination candidate for several advanced-level language qualifications, as well as being informed by his experiences as an academic researcher in multilingualism and translation studies and as a trainee teacher of English as an additional language. In the process of conducting research for a previous publication which profiled and analysed the relevant certifications available for three minority languages (Irish, Catalan, and Upper Sorbian), it became apparent that there was a relative paucity of general overviews of available language certifications. Indeed, as noted in that work, earlier studies had largely centred on widely-spoken world languages such as French, Spanish, and English (see, for example Yücelin, 2009; Garvida, 2009, Weir, Vidaković, and Galaczi, 2013). In addition, whilst acknowledging that a valuable and significant body of research relating to language testing is available, comparatively little of the literature to date has focused specifically on the upper echelons of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR); that is, on the C1 and especially C2 levels of that scale. Though work has been undertaken exploring practical aspects relating to teaching, writing, and vocabulary at that level (e.g. Capel, 2012, Isbell, 2017; Martins, 2019), to the author’s knowledge no comparative study profiling the characteristics of a range of individual CEFR C2 qualifications has yet been conducted. Hence, building on this observation, the aim of this contribution is to provide practical exploratory insights into the varying formats, structures, and requirements of official language certifications available for candidates at the CEFR C2 level. With an expected audience of language educators, language learners, and examination candidates, the aim is to offer a panoramic overview, thus helping to demystify some of the more arcane aspects surrounding these advanced-level qualifications.

### **The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the C2 level**

Now seemingly ubiquitous owing to its implementation in many national and international educational and administrative systems across Europe and beyond, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), was developed by the Council of Europe over two decades ago and was published in 2001 (Barni & Salvati, 2017, p. 418). The hallmark of the CEFR has been the

introduction of the recognisable six-level system to denote language competence across different productive and receptive skills: Basic User (A1 and A2); Independent User (B1 and B2); and Proficient User (C1 and C2). An update to the CEFR in 2020 has also formalised three ancillary levels – those of A2+, B1+, and B2+ (Council of Europe, 2020, pp. 172–175). Owing to their recency, these levels have yet to gain significant traction in the world of language testing, although this will most probably change in the future.

The development and implementation of the CEFR is grounded in a significant body of theoretical and practical research approaches, as exemplified by the amount of relevant documentation, guidelines, and other information which is available – for example, see Council of Europe (2001, 2018, 2020). Yet, as noted elsewhere (for example, in Sokolovska's (2021) recent language-focused monograph examining several decades of debates on multilingualism in the Council of Europe), the ideas underpinning the development of the CEFR are also part of creating and promulgating a wider notion of a common European multilingual and multicultural identity (see also Trim, 2010, p. 3). Indeed, the CEFR is advantageous as it offers an easily comparable method of comparing skills in different languages. As summarised succinctly (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 175), it is based on a wide-ranging set of statements which define what language users can do in the skills across different levels. These are framed in positive terms which seek to establish learners' capabilities rather than any deficiencies. Unsurprisingly, given the rigorous way it has been developed over twenty years of usage, as well as the ease with which it can be applied the CEFR has had a wide uptake not only among language professionals and students, but also among educational institutions at all levels, national and international public bodies, as well as across the private sector. Despite its name, which indicates its European origins and focus, the CEFR is also growing in popularity outside Europe. However, it is important to note that other frameworks for gauging language proficiency do exist; these include, the American Council of Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL), which is widely used in North America for academic and other purposes and assesses language skills according to five levels: Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Superior, and Distinguished, with further subdivisions available for the first three levels (ACTFL, 2012, p. 3). In China, Hanban, the organisation responsible for running the international network of Confucius Institutes and for promoting Mandarin Chinese abroad, has also developed its own six-level framework for the written Chinese-language tests offered through the Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK) suite of examinations for foreign learners (Peng, Yan, and Chen, 2021, p. 326). Turning to the C2 level of the CEFR, this represents the sixth and highest level of the framework. Although both C1 and C2 levels are termed 'Proficient User', the C2 level goes beyond the effective operational proficiency which is expected at C1 level. Indeed, unlike certification at other levels (especially CEFR B2 and C1, which are often requested as confirmation of sufficient language proficiency for work or study in the given language), C2 certificates appear to be rarely asked for, save for highly-specialised educational and professional programmes requiring extremely advanced skills such as translation and interpreting (for example, see the German-language requirements for the BA in Language, Culture, and Translation offered by Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (2022)). As such, anecdotal evidence among learners and teachers of foreign languages suggests that myths abound as to the difficulty and requirements of examinations at this advanced level. Aside from challenges in sourcing adequate preparation materials, in the experience of the author it has been noted that some have described the linguistic requirements for C2 qualifications as being of a level similar to that of a 'native-speaker'. Whilst acknowledging that the exam requires an advanced standard of proficiency – for example, on their website, Cambridge English Language Assessment states that a "C2 Proficiency qualification shows the world that you have mastered English to an exceptional level. It proves you can communicate with the fluency and sophistication of a highly competent English speaker" (Cambridge English Language Assessment, 2022a) – the official 2001 Council of Europe descriptors for CEFR C2 level note explicitly that L1-level competence is not required:

"Level C2, whilst it has been termed 'Mastery', is not intended to imply native-speaker or near native-speaker competence. What is intended is to characterise the degree of precision, appropriateness and ease with the language which typifies the speech of those who have been highly successful learners. Descriptors calibrated here include: convey finer shades of meaning precisely by using, with reasonable accuracy, a wide range of modification devices; has a good command of idiomatic expression and

colloquialism with awareness of connotative level of meaning; backtrack and restructure around a difficulty so smoothly the interlocutor is hardly aware of it” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 36).

As such, this highlights that, although some organisations do indeed offer language proficiency examinations at the so-called native speaker or L1 level (for example, see Dolzhikova and Kurilenko, 2021), the C2 level does not appear to fulfil this requirement. Indeed, during the early stages of the development of the CEFR provision was also made to accommodate a potential ‘D’ level at some future time, which would cater for the needs of language specialists requiring highly advanced competence (Trim, 2010, pp. 11–12).

#### **CEFR qualifications offered by the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE)**

As noted above, examinations aligned to the CEFR are organised by many different institutions and organisations and cover a wide range of languages and levels. Though these qualifications may enjoy different accreditations within various jurisdictions, several leading awarding bodies are members of the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE), an umbrella organisation operational since 1990 (ALTE, 2020, p.1). In bringing together institutional representatives of various countries and languages, it aims to highlight best-practice procedures in language testing – for example, by ensuring that common standards and levels of proficiency are adhered to. As at May 2022, ALTE comprises 33 Full Members, representing 26 different languages; in addition (ALTE, 2022a), there are almost one hundred institutional Associate Members (ALTE, 2022b). To become a Full Member, the necessary criteria include several requirements, including the stipulation to offer language tests in an official language of the country where the relevant applicant institution is based (for instance, an institution based in Poland must offer testing possibilities in Polish, given that it is the official language of the country). Furthermore, at least one of the language certifications offered by the relevant institution must undergo a comprehensive auditing procedure by ALTE and receive the coveted ALTE Q-Mark, which demonstrates a strong degree of conformity with ALTE’s best-practice standards in language testing and thus is a trusted indicator of the highest quality (ALTE, 2022c). At this point, it is important to note that not all Full Members offer language examinations at each level of the CEFR A1-C2 spectrum; indeed, some offer a more limited palette (for instance, from CEFR A2 to C1). Qualifications are offered in international languages such as English, French, German, and Spanish, as well as less commonly-taught languages including Czech, Finnish, Lithuanian, and Swedish. Full Members offering qualifications in minority languages such as Irish and Luxembourgish are also represented. In addition, a much wider range of qualifications and languages – even including perhaps unexpected tongues such as Esperanto and Tatar – is also offered by ALTE’s Associate Members (ALTE, 2022b); however, whilst still satisfying certain core requirements, these organisations have not undergone the aforementioned procedure to become fully-accredited by ALTE.

#### **Approach and research questions**

In considering the foregoing presentation of the origins, structure, and development of the CEFR and ALTE with special regard to the C2 proficiency level, the next phase of this study sought to investigate the nature of the CEFR C2 qualifications on offer. Noting its exploratory character, relevant online resources – comprising mainly the websites of the selected qualifications under analysis – were utilised to gain further information. By taking ALTE-accredited qualifications as a starting point for the scope of the study, it was felt that this provided a convenient framework to develop the analysis. However, it was recognised that several further language qualifications are available at the C2 level but which represent institutions and organisations that are not Full Members of ALTE. Building on the findings of the current study, this may provide material for further research at a subsequent time. In this regard, two research questions were proposed:

- i. Among ALTE Full Members, how many C2 level qualifications are offered?
- ii. What is the format, structure, and requirements for each of these C2 level qualifications?

In terms of the chosen methodology, qualitative desk-based research was employed in order to find out the necessary information and ascertain the precise requirements of the different C2-level qualifications selected for analysis. Indeed, as outlined by Bassot (2022), a desk-based approach is appropriate for a “comparison of settings” (Bassot, 2022, p. 10), particularly in an international context. Yet, as will be outlined in more detail in the conclusion to this article, it is acknowledged that this approach can also have several limitations. However, desk-based analyses have featured in several

studies focusing on various aspects of language assessment and testing (for example, see Collins (2011); Shrestha (2018), etc).

### Results and discussion

As mentioned previously, there were 33 Full Members of ALTE as at May 2022, who represent 26 languages. Further analysis revealed that of this number, 15 Full Members (45%) offer 18 CEFR C2 qualifications across a range of 12 different languages (46%). Table 1 below depicts the language, the name of the test offered, as well as the relevant ALTE Full Member institution responsible for the qualification.

Language <sup>1</sup>	Name of qualification	ALTE Full Member
BG	Стандартизиран тест по български език като чужд C2 [Standartiziran test po bulgarski ezik kato chuzhd C2]	Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”
CA	Certificat de nivell superior de català C2	Generalitat de Catalunya
	Certificat de nivell superior de català C2 (Institut Ramon Llull)	
DE	telc Deutsch C2	TELC
	Goethe-Zertifikat C2: Großes Deutsches Sprachdiplom	Goethe-Institut
	ÖSD Zertifikat C2	ÖSD
	ÖSD Zertifikat C2 – Wirtschaftssprache Deutsch	
EN	C2 Proficiency	Cambridge Assessment English
	Graded Exams in Spoken English Grade 12 – C2	Trinity College London
	Integrated Skills in English 4 – C2	
ES	DELE C2 – Diploma de Español como Lengua Extranjera	Instituto Cervantes
EU	C2 maila – HABE	Eusko Jaurlaritza
FI	National Certificate of Language Proficiency C2 (YKI)	Jyväskylän yliopisto ja Opetushallitus
FR	DALF C2 – Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française C2	France Éducation International
GL	CELGA 5	Xunta de Galicia
IT	CELI 5 – C2	Università per Stranieri di Perugia
PT	DUPLE - Diploma Universitário de Português Língua Estrangeira	CAPLE; Universidade de Lisboa
TR	Türkçe Yeterlik Sınavı (TYS)	Yunus Emre Enstitüsü

**Table 1.** Availability of CEFR C2 qualifications offered by ALTE Full Members (Source: The author, based on the sources in endnote 2)<sup>2</sup>

Table 1 reiterates that ALTE-accredited CEFR C2 qualifications are available for a range of European languages. In addition to English, French, and Spanish, they also include Bulgarian and Finnish. Of particular interest is the availability of relevant qualifications for the co-official languages of Spain (Basque, Catalan, and Galician), perhaps in recognition of the importance of certifying competency in these languages for domestic educational and professional purposes. For 9 of the 12

<sup>1</sup> The languages listed here are denoted by the relevant ISO 639-1-codes: BG – Bulgarian; CA – Catalan; DE – German; EN – English; ES – Spanish; EU – Basque (Euskara); FI – Finnish; FR – French; GL – Galician; IT – Italian; PT – Portuguese; TR – Turkish.

<sup>2</sup> Sources consulted in preparing Tables 1-3: Cambridge English Language Assessment (2022a); CAPLE (2022); Finnish National Agency for Education (2022); France Éducation international (2022); Generalitat de Catalunya (2022a); Goethe-Institut (2022); HABE (2022); Institut Ramon Llull (2022a); Instituto Cervantes (2022); ÖSD (2022a; 2022b); telc language tests (2022); Trinity College London (2022a; 2022b); Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” (2022); Università per Stranieri di Perugia (2022); Xunta de Galicia (2022a); Yunus Emre Enstitüsü (2022).

languages (75%), the option listed above represents the only ALTE-approved C2 certification at the time of writing. For German, English, and Catalan, however, multiple potential qualification options are available (4, 3, and 2 respectively). In the case of the latter, this is because the awarding body, the Generalitat de Catalunya, offers two different language qualifications for two specific audiences. One is primarily intended for domestic use within Catalonia, whereas the other is associated with the Institut Ramon Llull, an institution funded by the Generalitat which exists to promote the spread and use of the Catalan language outside the areas where the language is traditionally spoken, including at universities abroad (for more information, see Fernández, 2017, p. 150, Institut Ramon Llull, 2022b).

Interestingly, given the advanced skills required at the C2 level, it is notable that the overwhelming majority (17 out of 18; 94%) of the examinations on offer are generalist in approach. The only specialised one is the C2 diploma in Business German (ÖSD Zertifikat C2 / Wirtschaftssprache Deutsch) offered by the ÖSD, who also offer a generalist C2-level qualification too, the ÖSD Zertifikat C2 (ÖSD, 2022a, 2022b). Moving on the specific details of each individual C2 certification, Table 2 presents the format of each examination – for instance, whether competence solely at the C2 level is tested; whether candidates can also receive certification at other levels; whether partial certification options are available; and whether other methods to receive the qualification aside from sitting the examination are possible.

<b>Format</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Name of qualification</b>
<b>Written and oral examination at one level (i.e. C2)<sup>3</sup></b>	BG	Стандартизиран тест по български език като чужд C2 [Standartiziran test po bulgarski ezik kato chuzhd C2]
	CA	Certificat de nivell superior de català C2
		Certificat de nivell superior de català C2 (Institut Ramon Llull)
	DE	telc Deutsch C2
	DE	Goethe-Zertifikat C2: Großes Deutsches Sprachdiplom
	DE	ÖSD Zertifikat C2
	DE	ÖSD Zertifikat C2 / Wirtschaftssprache Deutsch
	EN	Graded Exams in Spoken English Grade 12 – C2
	EN	Integrated Skills in English 4 – C2
	ES	DELE C2 - Diploma de Español como Lengua Extranjera
	EU	C2 maila – HABE
	FR	DALF C2 – Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française C2
	IT	CELI 5 – C2
	PT	DUPLE - Diploma Universitário de Português Língua Estrangeira
<b>Multiple levels tested in one examination (e.g. C1/C2)</b>	EN	C2 Proficiency
	FI	National Certificate of Language Proficiency C2 (YKI)
	TR	Türkçe Yeterlik Sınavı (TYS)
<b>Partial certification option available</b>	DE	Goethe-Zertifikat C2: Großes Deutsches Sprachdiplom
	DE	ÖSD Zertifikat C2
	DE	ÖSD Zertifikat C2 – Wirtschaftssprache Deutsch
<b>Qualification available through accreditation of prior learning</b>	CA	Certificat de nivell superior de català C2
	EU	C2 maila – HABE
	GL	CELGA 5

<sup>3</sup> In these examinations, the sole award available for candidates is a C2-level qualification; there is no scope for a lower award to be made if candidates do not satisfy the proficiency requirements for CEFR C2.

**Table 2:** Format of CEFR C2 qualifications offered by ALTE Full Members (Source: The author, based on the sources in endnote 2)

As portrayed in Table 2, more than three-quarters of the qualifications analysed (14 out of 18; 78%) comprise a written and oral examination that tests proficiency at one level only: the C2 level. Three certifications, however, also make allowance for performance at other levels. For example, the examination of the Finnish National Certificate of Language Proficiency tests the C1 and C2 level in a single ‘Advanced’ examination (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2022), whereas the Cambridge C2 Proficiency also grants an attestation of C1 level skills to those candidates whose performance falls below the C2 threshold (Cambridge English Language Assessment, 2022a). Three of the qualifications for German (the Goethe Institut’s Goethe-Zertifikat C2 and the two examinations offered by ÖSD) also offer partial certification – i.e. for test-takers seeking to certify just one or more skills (e.g. speaking or writing) or for those candidates who do not reach the pass mark in one of the papers examining a particular linguistic skill (Goethe-Institut, 2022). The vast majority of the qualifications were only available through examination on a specific day and time; however, the Integrated Skills in English 4 qualification offered by Trinity College London also required a portfolio of written work to be submitted before the examination (Trinity College London, 2022b). Interestingly, C2 qualifications for the co-official languages of Spain (e.g. Galician and the certification for Catalan aimed primarily at residents of Catalonia) offer the option of receiving the certification via accreditation of prior learning (APL); for example, for graduates in the relevant philological disciplines (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2022b). Indeed, although an examination-based pathway is available for the C2 certification in Catalan, the Galician CELGA 5 qualification is only available through APL, with those wishing to receive the certificate usually required to hold the C1-level qualification as well as documented proof of having undertaken further language-based study since it was awarded, or to be holders of degrees in Galician philology (Xunta de Galicia, 2022b).

Turning to the structure of the certifications analysed here, the vast majority focus on examining the four main productive and receptive skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, though these elements may be combined in various permutations, or (as in the case of the Trinity Grade 12 Exam in Spoken English) even be minimised or omitted. Taking this into account, Table 3 outlines the structural requirements (relating to the overall candidate performance required for the award) that test-takers should fulfil in order to receive the relevant C2 qualification.

Structural requirement	Language	Name of qualification
Passing grade required in each section of the examination <sup>4</sup>	BG	Стандартизиран тест по български език като чужд C2 [Standartiziran test po bulgarski ezik kato chuzhd C2]
	CA	Certificat de nivell superior de català C2
		Certificat de nivell superior de català C2 (Institut Ramon Llull)
	DE	telc Deutsch C2
	DE	Goethe-Zertifikat C2: Großes Deutsches Sprachdiplom
	DE	ÖSD Zertifikat C2
	DE	ÖSD Zertifikat C2 / Wirtschaftssprache Deutsch
	EN	Graded Exams in Spoken English Grade 12 – C2
	EN	Integrated Skills in English 4 – C2
	ES	DELE C2 - Diploma de Español como Lengua Extranjera
	EU	C2 maila – HABE
IT	CELI 5 – C2	

<sup>4</sup> This means that all sections of an examination are to be passed in order to receive the award. For example, to receive the full Goethe-Zertifikat C2: Großes Deutsches Sprachdiplom, a score of 60% in each of the four sections is required.

<b>Minimum score required in each section; passing grade required for whole examination<sup>5</sup></b>	FR	DALF C2 – Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française C2
<b>Only overall passing grade required</b>	EN	C2 Proficiency
	PT	DUPLE – Diploma Universitário de Português Língua Estrangeira
<b>Level/test score on a broader scale<sup>6</sup></b>	EN	C2 Proficiency
	FI	National Certificate of Language Proficiency C2 (YKI)
	TR	Türkçe Yeterlik Sınavı (TYS)

**Table 3:** Structural requirements (relating to the award of the full qualification) of CEFR C2 qualifications offered by ALTE Full Members<sup>7</sup> (Source: The author, based on the sources in endnote 2)

As *Table 3* illustrates, close to two-thirds (11 out of 17; 65%) of the CEFR C2 certifications require a passing grade in each section of the examination for candidates to receive the full award. The DALF C2 for French, however, requires a minimum score of 10/50 in both of the sections that comprise the qualification, but an overall score of 50/100 is still needed to obtain the diploma. For example, a candidate could receive the DALF C2 diploma with a score of 10/50 in one section and 40/50 on the other as both the overall passing grade and minimum score requirements have been satisfied (France Éducation International, 2022). The Cambridge C2 Proficiency and the Portuguese DUPLE examinations, though, only require an overall passing grade to be attained irrespective of the scores in each section. Finally, though some qualifications award overall grades to differentiate between the levels of pass (for example, the DUPLE distinguishes overall performance beyond the basic passing grade of ‘Suficiente’ by the labels of ‘Bom’ (Good) and ‘Muito Bom’ (Very Good) (CAPLE, 2022), the C2 Proficiency examination and the Turkish TYS provide a numerical score on a sliding scale that typically corresponds to placement on the broader CEFR spectrum (see Cambridge English Language Assessment, 2022a; Yunus Emre Enstitüsü, 2022). By way of example, in the case of the Cambridge English examinations, linguistic proficiency from pre-A1 up to C2 is reported on a linear scale which runs from 80 to 230. C2 Proficiency level is defined as a score between 200 and 230 (Cambridge English Language Assessment, 2022b).

### Conclusions and the need for further research

The objective of this article was to offer practical insights relating to the format, structure, and requirements of various C2-level language qualifications. In gathering together this information in one place, it is intended for it to be a useful resource for test takers, teachers, and language learners. As this study has established, not all of ALTE’s Full Members currently offer C2-level certifications, with 15 organisations offering 18 qualifications in 12 languages. The analysis has shown that commonly only one C2 qualification is available per language, save for Catalan, English, and German, and that the formats of these examination show a diversity of approaches. Single-level examinations appear to be the norm, with limited scope for partial or multi-level certification, and some Full Members also permit their C2 qualifications to be awarded via APL. Overall success is generally determined by obtaining a passing grade in each relevant examination section, though this may differ between awarding bodies. It is important to note at this point that several possible limitations of the study were also noted. Although the researcher has an academic and practical background in Germanic, Romance, and Slavic languages, certain qualifications represented languages (for example in Basque, Finnish, and Turkish) which did not form part of his professional combination. However, in this case, sources in other languages (e.g. Spanish and English) were also used to obtain the necessary data. In addition, the constantly evolving

<sup>5</sup> As illustrated in the example of the French DALF C2 qualification, a minimum score is required in specific sections in addition to an overall passing grade.

<sup>6</sup> As demonstrated in the case of the Cambridge English qualifications, a linear scale from 80 to 230 encompasses language proficiency from pre-A1 up to C2 level. A score higher than 200 points is deemed to be CEFR C2 level (Proficiency).

<sup>7</sup> As mentioned previously, the Galician CELGA 5 C2 qualification is not included in this list as it is available only by APL.

nature of language assessment and training means that, though this information was applicable at the time of writing, things may of course change at a later date. Accordingly, noting the practical focus of this study, test-takers and teachers using the data presented here are also advised to check the most up-to-date official sources regarding examination structures and regulations when preparing and signing up for the chosen qualification. In outlining the basic characteristics of the qualifications, it would be advisable to supplement this preliminary internet-based study with further research. Possible options may entail, for example, interviews with staff from the relevant organisations and with test-takers. Additionally, wider comparisons with ALTE-accredited CEFR C1 qualifications (which are significantly more numerous) could be made. Finally, the findings presented here could be contrasted with those CEFR C2 certifications offered by ALTE's Associate Members and also by non-ALTE members. Examples of the former include the PLIDA C2 qualification in Italian (Società Dante Alighieri, 2022), whereas representative of the latter is the Certificate of Attainment in Modern Greek C2/Γ2 (Centre for the Greek Language, 2022). In short, with the field of language testing and assessment remaining ever evolving, together with growing professional requirements for linguistic certifications, this article has demonstrated that this domain represents an interesting and rewarding field of research with significant prospects for further analysis. Accordingly, in helping to clarify aspects relating to the CEFR C2 level and the relevant qualifications available, it is hoped that this preliminary overview will be useful for a wide audience.

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