

## Pontifical Biblical Institute (Rome)

### Qualification Exam for English

The goal of the exam is to verify that the candidate is proficient with English at the B2 level (upper intermediate), according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The exam consists of four parts:

- 1) Listening (15 minutes): The candidate will listen to a passage twice in order to respond to questions about the text in order to demonstrate oral comprehension.
- 2) Conversation (15 minutes): The candidate will engage in a simple dialogue with the examiner about a topic to demonstrate his/her active communication skills. The topic of the conversation will be provided ten minutes before the exam.
- 3) Grammar Skills (45 minutes): The candidate will be given an objective exam, consisting of multiple choice questions, that will test basic grammar skills (morphology and syntax).
- 4) Writing and Written Comprehension (60 minutes): The candidate will be requested to demonstrate his/her competency of the written language by being able to summarize and synthesize information about a text. Moreover, the candidate, with the help of a dictionary, should be able to express his or her thoughts and opinions regarding the topic, after having read the text critically. The written work should be comprehensible and well-structured (e.g., relatively free of grammatical and spelling errors, contains proper syntax, organized in well-written paragraph(s)).

#### Expected Language Skills

- Morphology
  - The candidate can demonstrate mastery of the morphology of the various parts of speech (Verbs, Nouns, Pronouns, Adjectives, Adverbs, Prepositions, Conjunctions, Interjections) in English. For a detailed list of grammatical skills, see B2 Level Standards.
- Syntax
  - The candidate can demonstrate proficiency in basic syntax (word order, agreement, independent and dependent clauses, relative clauses, complex sentences, coordination, expressions of time, cleft sentences). For the expectations regarding syntax, see B2 Level Standards.
- Vocabulary
  - The candidate can demonstrate sufficient knowledge of terminology for a wide range of subjects and can explain his/her viewpoint or opinions regarding these topics. The candidate can converse with a fair degree of confidence, ask for and understand clarifications, and speak in a comprehensible and fluid manner. He/she can demonstrate both aural comprehension and active knowledge of the language. For a detailed lists of themes, see B2 Level Standards.
- Writing & Comprehension
  - The candidate can understand a fairly specialized piece of academic writing, summarize and synthesize its ideas, and respond to it with a clear, reasonable, and well-organized argument that expresses his/her ideas or opinions. The candidate is familiar with the differences between the written and spoken language. Finally, the candidate is able to compose a well-structured paragraph and/or essay in response to a written text.

Some helpful resources to help candidates prepare for the exam include:

- MURPHY, Raymond, *English Grammar in Use* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).
- MOORE, Julie and Richard STORTON, *Oxford Academic Vocabulary Practice: B2-C1*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).
- WHITE, Genevieve, *Writing: B2*. (Collins, 2014).

(Feb 2022)