

Press Information

24 August 2007

UK Government Accreditation for Cambridge ESOL Certificates

The UK Government's exam watchdog for England has officially accredited a range of English language exams taken by learners throughout the world. The accreditation by the government's Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) covers the Cambridge ESOL certificates including world-renowned qualifications such as the First Certificate in English (FCE), Business English Certificate (BEC) and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

The government have recognised the need for assessment not only for people looking for permanent residency but also those wishing to live and work in the UK on a temporary basis. Many non-permanent residents want an English language certificate which will be recognised not only in the UK, but around the world. The QCA responded to the requests by creating a new category of qualifications specifically for learners of English which could be accredited, while remaining separate from the 'Skills for Life'.

Dr Michael Milanovic, Chief Executive of Cambridge ESOL said:

"It is encouraging to see the government recognising international qualifications and we are sure that the accreditation will have a positive impact on learners of the English language. We are committed to providing language qualifications for all learners of English and recognition of our qualifications continues to grow all over the world, giving learners the opportunity to have a truly valuable qualification".

The accreditation also means government funding will be available for some learners as IELTS at level 2 will now qualify for government funding in the state sector. IELTS is taken by more than 700,000 people every year in over 120 countries worldwide. It is currently the only ESOL qualification within the new accreditation category for which funding will be available.

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Notes to Editors:**About Cambridge ESOL**

University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group, a not-for-profit organisation and a department of the University of Cambridge. It is part of the Cambridge Assessment group, which is Europe's largest assessment agency. We provide examinations in English language for over 2 million people every year, in more than 130 countries, as well as a range of qualifications for language teachers.

Our examinations are developed on the basis of a long-term process of academic and practical research, to ensure that they are accurate, fair, reliable and relevant, and that they encourage learners to develop the skills they need to use English effectively in the real world.

University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations is a founder member of the Association of Language Testers in Europe and works closely with testing organisations, schools and academics throughout the world to support the development of language testing in theory and practice

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