

1. What is the CEFR?

CEFR stands for Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The best known components of the CEFR are the global proficiency scale and the “can do” statements. Learners are categorised under three levels:

CEFR LEVEL	USER
C2	Proficient user
C1	
B2	Independent user
B1	
A2	Basic user
A1	

The “can do” statements:

COMMON REFERENCE LEVELS: GLOBAL SCALE		
Proficient User Able to fully participate in professional and academic life.	C2	Able to understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Able to summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Able to express himself/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Able to understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Able to express himself/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Able to use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Able to produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User Able to express views and hold one's own in social discourse.	B2	Able to understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Able to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Able to produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
	B1	Able to understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Able to deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Able to describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User Able to carry out "real life" tasks of a touristic nature.	A2	Able to understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Able to communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Able to use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Able to introduce himself/herself and others, and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Able to interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

2. How does the CEFR measure language proficiency?

The CEFR distinguishes five communicative skills, namely listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production, and writing. Language proficiency is measured in relation to the five skills on a scale beginning with A1, and progressing through A2, B1, B2, C1 to C2. Proficiency in each skill is defined in each stage by a series of “can do” statements.

3. Can the CEFR be used for other languages?

It could equally well be used for the teaching and learning of Bahasa Melayu, Mandarin or Tamil or indeed in any other language.

4. Background of the CEFR

The CEFR belongs to a research paradigm concerned with the measurement of language proficiency which started in the 1950s. It was originally devised to improve language teaching in Europe and now is being implemented worldwide. Many countries for example, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Ecuador, Canada, Sweden, Spain and Finland have made use of the CEFR as a basis for reforming English language education in their own countries.

5. Why the CEFR?

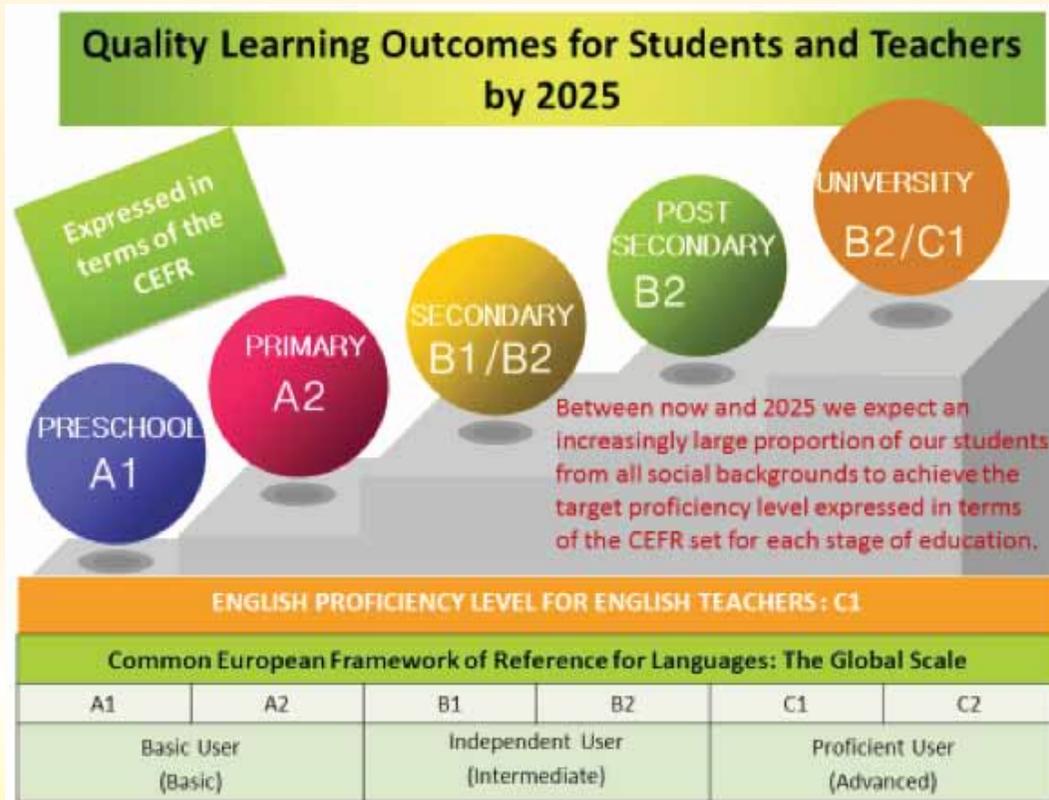
The CEFR is of international standard. The adoption of international standards saves an enormous amount of unnecessary work. The CEFR descriptors are readily available and can be used by all parties including curriculum designers, teachers, material developers and assessors alike. The adoption of the CEFR can lead to improvement in language education, which if carried out with sufficient determination and rigour, can also lead to excellence at the international level.

6. What are the uses of the CEFR?

The CEFR is a planning tool which provides a common comprehensive framework for language teaching and learning, and for the development of language teaching programmes, and provides the means to communicate more easily what we mean and understand by language competencies and proficiencies. It can also be used to compare different language education systems, and to assess a single country's language education system relative to international best practice. This process is known as benchmarking.

7. What are the staged targets for each level of learners?

By year 2025 learners are to achieve the following levels of proficiency:



Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

English Language Standards and Quality Council

Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia
 Kompleks Pendidikan Nilai, Lebuh Enstek, 71760 Bandar Enstek
 Negeri Sembilan Darul Khusus, MALAYSIA
 Tel: 06-797 9000 | Fax: 06-797 9113 / 114