

# The Michigan State University - Certificate of English Language Competency (MSU-CELC)

The Certificate of English Language Competency Examination from Michigan State University is a four-section test designed to assess English language ability at the B2 Level of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) in all four modalities (Writing, Listening, Reading, and Speaking). MSU-CELC is written by professional test developers who create new examinations for each MSU-CELC administration.

Special features of MSU-CELC include the following:

- The test uses everyday English as it is spoken and written around the world.
- Each speaking and writing sample is scored by a minimum of two raters.
- Previewing questions during the listening comprehension portion of the exam is allowed, and some extra time is provided for that purpose in Parts 2 and 3 of the listening section.
- Longer listening passages are played twice.
- The MSU-CELC (<http://www.msu-exams.gr/>) website includes a full-length practice test and information on test preparation.
- Scores are reported for each section—Writing, Listening, Reading, and Speaking
- Aggregate scoring is allowed. In accordance with the revised scoring policy, which becomes effective beginning with the December 2010 examinations, two criteria must be satisfied in order for an examinee to pass the examination and receive a certificate: the total score obtained from all four sections of the examination must be at least 60, and the scores from each of the 4 sections must be 12 or higher.
- Results are normally available within 30 working days.

The exam has four main sections: Writing Ability, Listening Ability, Reading Ability, and Speaking Ability. The Writing Ability section consists of an essay component and a multiple-choice grammar test. The listening, reading and grammar tests are in the multiple choice format.

# Scoring

Each section is scored on a scale from 0-25, so that 100 total points are possible. A total score of not less than 60 is required to pass, and additional scoring criteria must be satisfied (see “Important Notice” below). The essays are rated by highly trained, professional raters, as are the oral interviews. MSU-CELC scores are normally available within 30 days of taking the exam.

<b>Writing Ability</b>	25 points possible
<b>Listening Ability</b>	25 points possible
<b>Reading Ability</b>	25 points possible
<b>Speaking Ability</b>	25 points possible
<b>Total Score</b>	100 points possible [60 is passing]

## IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Each section of the examination (Writing, Listening, Reading, Speaking) is awarded 25 points for a maximum of 100. In accordance with the revised scoring policy, which becomes effective beginning with the December 2010 examinations, two criteria must be satisfied in order for an examinee to pass the examination and receive a certificate: the total score obtained from all four sections of the examination must be at least 60, and the scores from each of the 4 sections must be 12 or higher.

## MSU-CELC Section Names

### Section 1

*Think about it—Write about it!*

A test of English writing ability

(Note: This subsection counts for approximately 80% of the total writing ability section score.)

*Grammar you can use!*

A test of English Grammar

(Note: This subsection is taken between Section 2 and Section 3 and counts for approximately 20% of the Writing Ability section score.)

### Section 2

*Listen to this!*

A test of English listening ability

### Section 3

*Read about it!*

A test of English reading ability

### Section 4

*Talk about it!*

A test of English speaking ability

## **MSU-CELC Section 1: Think about it—Write about it! A test of English writing ability**

### Essay component of writing ability test

The MSU-CELC essay section offers you a choice of two prompts. You will choose one of the two prompts and respond in an essay developed and written to the best of your ability. For example, you may be asked to evaluate the effects of the pressure of choosing a career on young people. You will be given 35 minutes to write an essay. Your essay will then be evaluated by at least two trained, professional raters for development of ideas, organization and grammaticality, among other features of writing.

### **Grammar you can use!**

Grammar component of writing ability test (immediately follows the listening test, before the reading test)

The MSU-CELC grammar test consists of 40 items that require test takers to demonstrate their knowledge of English verb tenses and aspects (e.g., past tense, present perfect aspect), clause formation, complement structures and other common features of English grammar. You will read a sentence that contains a gap somewhere in the sentence. You will choose among four options (a, b, c, d) to provide the best answer to complete the sentence grammatically. Test takers have 20 minutes to complete the grammar portion of the MSU-CELC.

## **MSU-CELC Section 2: Listen to this! A test of English listening ability**

### Listening Comprehension

The B2 MSU-CELC listening comprehension section consists of three parts: Part One contains short conversations (1 to 2 turns per speaker) followed by a single multiple-choice question, Part Two contains medium length conversations (2-3 turns per speaker) followed by three to five multiple-choice questions, and Part 3 consists of 2 extended dialogs or presentations followed by 8-12 questions each. For Parts 2 and 3 you will be able to preview the questions before you hear the conversations (extra time is provided for that purposes). The questions have only three possible answers. You will choose answers “a” or “b” or “c”. Part Three contains extended pieces of spoken communication such as in depth conversations, announcements or similar samples of everyday, spoken language. Not only will you be able to preview these questions and look at them while you listen to the passages, but you will hear these extended passages twice. The Part Three listening passages are followed by 8-12 multiple-choice questions. All listening passages are preceded by a brief descriptive phrase that tells the examinee the general topic and context of what they are about to hear. The listening comprehension section of the MSU-CELC exam takes approximately 45 minutes.

**MSU-CELC Section 3:**  
**Read about it!**  
**A test of English reading ability**

Reading Comprehension

The MSU-CELC reading comprehension section is comprised of four reading passages and 40 test items. Each passage is followed by 8-12 multiple choice questions, depending on the length or complexity of the passage. The questions have four possible answers. You will choose answers “a” or “b” or “c” or “d”. Question types include comprehension (from main idea to discrete points of information), inference, vocabulary, and structure/logic questions (e.g., a sentence insertion question). Test takers have 55 minutes to complete the reading comprehension portion of the MSU-CELC.

**MSU-CELC Section 4:**  
**Talk about it!**  
**A test of English speaking ability**

Oral Interview

The MSU-CELC Oral Interview is a guided 12-15 minute interview with multiple parts. Two examiners will sit with each candidate and evaluate the performance. The interview begins with a one-minute warm-up section (not scored) followed by six tasks that have been confirmed at the B2 level in the CEFR framework. The types of tasks on the speaking test include description, narration, and supported opinion. Candidates should bear in mind that meeting the B2 standard implies that they demonstrate the ability to elaborate, and that their speech is intelligible to individuals not accustomed to accented speech.