



Cambridge English Certificate: The French Ministry of National Education

Client: Ministry of National Education

Country: France



Cambridge English Language Assessment developed a tailor-made English language test as part of a nationwide scheme to improve French school-leavers' second-language ability.

Following a competitive tender process, we were awarded the contract to provide English language certification in state secondary schools across France by the French Ministry of National Education.

The contract requirement was to develop an English language examination to be taken by students in their final year of obligatory schooling (age 16) that was linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

We developed the *Cambridge English Certificate (CEC)* specifically for the project. It was designed to assess at CEFR Levels A2 and B1.

Benchmarking against the CEFR provided a practical tool for setting standards to be attained at successive stages of learning, and enabled data to

be compared across qualifications in different languages – the Ministry of National Education had widened the project to include German, English and Spanish language tests.

We provided a range of support services during the implementation of the exam, including training and co-ordination for test administrators and providing training, seminars and support materials for teachers.

Since the exam's launch in 2008, over 140,000 students have taken the CEC, enabling a significant proportion of French high school students to obtain international certification of their language level and improve their chances in higher education and work.

In 2010, the Ministry of National Education extended the contract to 2014. In July 2014, we retained the contract following another public tender and will continue to run these tests until 2018.

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