Cambridge English
Transforming Language Education

English Skills for Competitive Advantage

Client: Ministry of Education and Training
Country: Vietnam

Cambridge English Language Assessment has enabled the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) to set benchmarks for English language proficiency as part of an initiative to improve Vietnam's competitiveness.

MOET had identified English skills as key to the development of Vietnam's economy, not only in the context of international commerce, but also to improve the career prospects of its students. As a result, in 2009 MOET began to work very closely with Cambridge English Language Assessment to develop benchmarks for English language proficiency among both students and teachers.

These benchmarks would be based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), and followed the Vietnamese Government's decision, in 2008, to officially use the CEFR to define English language exit benchmarks for students ranging from primary through to tertiary level. The project also gave Vietnamese learners the opportunity to gain an internationally recognised Cambridge English language qualification.

To deliver the project, the Cambridge team worked with MOET's National Foreign Language 2020 Project and various functional departments. As a result, in 2010, *Cambridge English: Young Learners (YLE) Starters* and *Movers* tests (at CEFR A1 level) were recommended by MOET as benchmark tests for primary school students. MOET has also now adopted CEFR Levels A1 (beginner), A2, and B1 as the required standards for students leaving Primary, Junior High and Secondary High schools. *Cambridge English: Key (KET)* and *Cambridge English: Preliminary (PET)* are widely used for state school students, with *Cambridge English: First (FCE)* being one of the requirements for English teachers.

Overall the collaboration has proved highly productive, as Dr Nguyen Loc, Vice Director of MOET's National Institute for Educational Strategies and Curriculum, explained: 'This is a strategic co-operation, playing a key role in the innovation process of English teaching, learning and assessment in Vietnam, with the aim of making English a competitive advantage for Vietnam.'

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